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DENMARK IN HISTORY

DENMARK IN HISTORY

BY

J. H. S. BIRCH

LONDON

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.

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PREFACE

I HAVE endeavoured in these pages to present in readable form the story of Denmark from prehistoric times to the present age. Though it was my original intention to cover every field of development, I was soon to realise that this was impossible if undue compression was to be avoided. My main concern has therefore been with the International and Constitutional aspects of Danish history. This is not to say that the cultural and social aspects have been entirely overlooked.

I am under a deep debt of gratitude to Professor Fabricius, the Professor of History in the University of Copenhagen, who, in condescending to inspect my manuscript, saved me from many errors and offered me many useful suggestions. I desire also to express my grateful thanks to the Danish publishing firm of Glydendal to whose courtesy I owe the publication of the illustrations and maps which appear in this book.

There will be some of my readers who are not specially interested in the beginnings of the human race. I would advise them to pass lightly over the first pages of this book till they reach the periods of history which appeal to them.

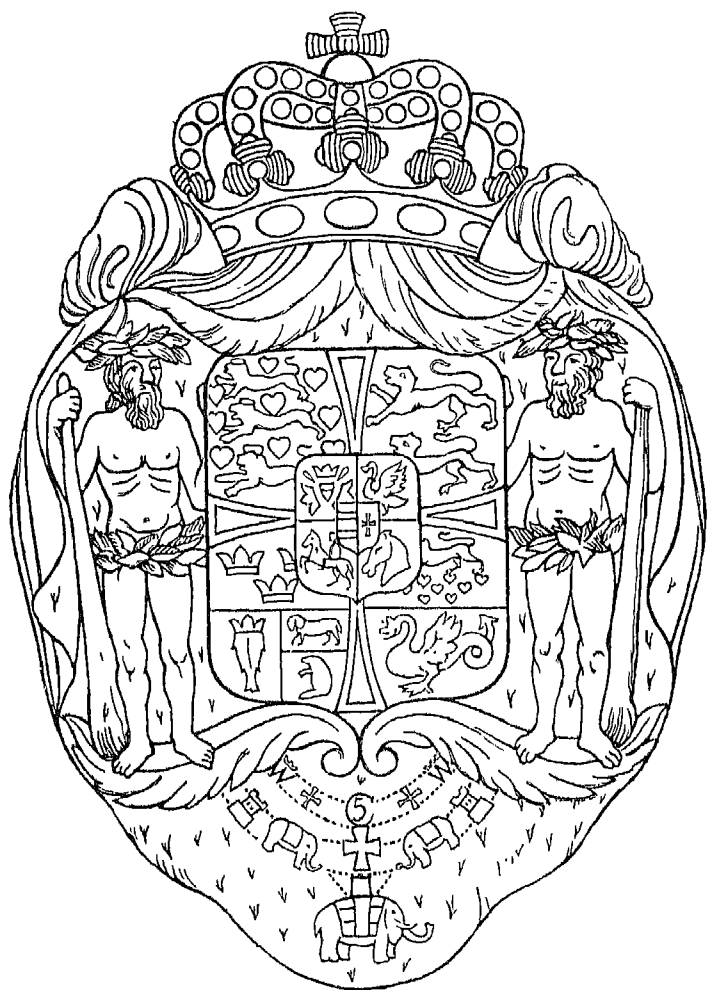
GUATEMALA,

September, 1937.

ERRATUM

For Glydendal read Gyldendal

P. vii.



THE ROYAL ARMS OF DENMARK

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BOOK I
PREHISTORIC AND MEDIAEVAL

CHAPTER I

DENMARK was no more free than her northern neighbours from the fables and super-incumbent fiction that surround their early history. Any attempt to separate the true facts from this confused material presupposes an indulgent critic. A mistaken national pride led both Swedish and Danish historians of the seventeenth century into the wildest extravagances when discoursing on the origins of their respective races. For instance, the versatile Rudbeck of Upsala proved to his own satisfaction and to the satisfaction of his contemporaries that the valleys of Dalarne were the original site of the Garden of Eden. In foolish rivalry, Lyscander, the historian of Christian IV of Denmark, claimed no less convincing proof that Noah had settled in Jutland after landing from the Ark. It would be unfair to apply the same incredulous eye to all the much-famed sagas of the Norwegian chieftains who settled in Iceland: many of them are too near to the realities of history to be discarded as merely the outpourings of sensational and imaginative minds. For the earlier traces of Scandinavia we must turn to the traditions bequeathed to us by the old Roman and Greek chroniclers. Through Pythias,¹ a merchant of Marseilles, we hear first of Denmark, a land hitherto unknown to the civilised world. Passing through the Straits of Gibraltar he sailed north to Britain and, after reaching its northern-most isles, turned towards the land of Thule, the locality of which has been much disputed by northern historians. Wherever it may have been, it could provide fruit, millet and honey from which a fermented liquor was prepared. Centuries passed before the northern lands were to attract the attention of Pliny the Elder, Tacitus and the Alexandrine Ptolemy.

¹ Though Pythias was disbelieved by Polybius and Strabo, the researches of later times have lent credence to much of his writings.

THE DANISH STONE AGE

Man made his first appearance in Denmark soon after the last glacial period though the escape from inland ice of parts of Jutland suggests the possibility of an earlier habitation. Only four-legged animals such as the mammoth and musk ox are known to have existed in the inter-glacial periods. After the final glacial retreat the land level of Denmark was very different than that of to-day. The southern part of Denmark must have been at least 40 metres higher, so high that connection with the Kattegat through the Great Belt must have been impossible. Then the Danish Isles formed a solid mass directly connected with the German lowland. Jutland, too, stretched further westwards. It was not until the Stone Age that the earth began to sink to its present level, the Danish Isles became separated from Jutland and Scania, and the beech and oak supplanted the fir tree. To the question how long ago man lived at the same time as the reindeer, geologists reply that the post-glacial period opened about 10,000 B.C.

In Denmark there was nothing corresponding to the period known in Western and Central Europe as the Palaeolithic Age, with its discovery of instruments in the gravel soil of the Somme, Seine and Garonne and of the south of England. The Danish Stone Age could be placed at the side of the Mesolithic and Neolithic Ages in other countries. When the sinking process began about 5000 B.C., men deserted the forests for the coasts to seek another means of livelihood. The most telling evidence is found in the "Kökkenmöddinger" (kitchen middens) which are large heaps piled along the shores consisting mainly of oyster and mussel shells. Here also men buried their dead. The period can be guessed from the discovery therein of bones of animals long since extinct in Denmark, such as the wild boar and the *bos primogenius*. The pursuit of game was an easy matter in the immense forests that covered the greater part of the land. In the fashioning of instruments, men showed less skill than in the construction of their sepulchral vaults. Their sides were built of solid, though uneven blocks, some adorned inside with drawings and figures. Bodies were laid there without being burnt and at the side of them every form of weapon and amber ornament.

TEUTONES, CIMBRI AND AMBRONES

The change from the Stone to the Bronze Age was a slow process. Bronze and copper were known in South and Central Europe hundreds of years before they came to be used in the north. The Bronze Age (about 1800 to 1200 B.C.) opened there when men were learning to travel and trade. The population of the time must have reached a fairly advanced state of culture, for none but trained hands could have given out such brilliant examples of bronze handiwork, diadems, bracelets, fine armour and knives engraved with Oriental designs. This age also brought a change in funeral rites. From about 1500 B.C. common graves were supplanted by single graves and a few hundred years later the habit of burning bodies and placing the ashes in clay urns became general. Relics of this period have been found not only in the sepulchres but in peat bogs. A peculiar feature was the discovery of metal axes of the English-looking type. Although not free from foreign influences, the Bronze Age in Denmark is the time when the northern countries developed a common culture and a northern spirit.

As with the preceding age, Denmark was far behind the Central European countries in the acquisition of iron as a new metal. The "Hallstatt" period in mid-Europe corresponded to the young Bronze Age in Denmark. The effect of the "La Tene" (Celtic) art is seen in the elegant four-wheeled carts which have been found in various parts of the country. Of the old and the new Iron Ages in Denmark, the former showed its superiority in the art and skill applied to the making of objects of use. For Denmark it was a period of isolation and enfeeblement even if she was not completely shut off from southern countries.

The racial distribution of Europe in the third and fourth centuries B.C. was not particularly favourable to the development of culture in northern lands. Between Denmark and the Celts were the German races, of which she had little to learn. Two centuries later we discover the first traces of the Northerners' "wanderlust"¹ when the three Northern

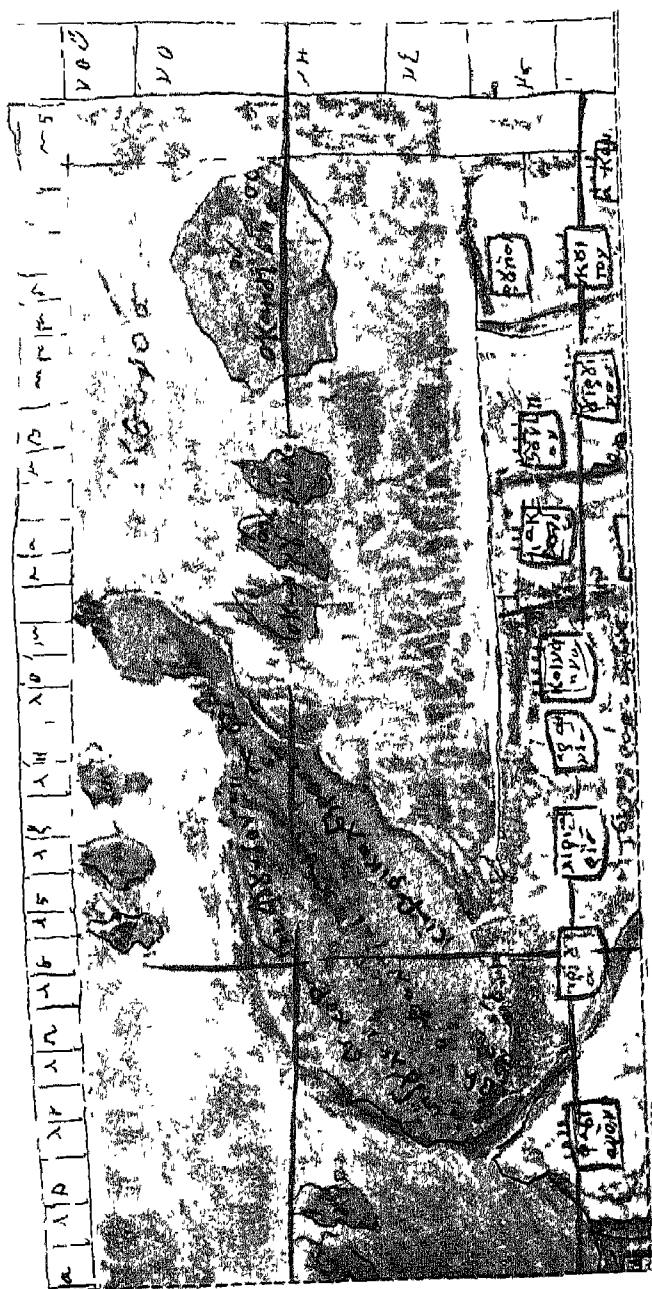
¹ While it has been asserted by the earliest writers that the cause of the migration was the inundating of their coasts, the more likely motive was the need of new lands for a rapidly growing population.

INFLUENCE OF THE ROMANS

tribes, the Teutones, Cimbri and Ambrones, with their women and children, became a serious threat to the Roman Kingdom. After being beaten by the Celts in Bohemia on two occasions, they retreated to the Danube and directed their attacks against the Roman province of Noricum in 113 B.C. During the next nine years, Roman Consuls, one after the other, fell to these barbarous invaders, first in the battle of Noreja (now Neu-markt). Though the whole way to Rome lay open to them the three armies separated; the Cimbri crossed the Pyrenees to Spain and the two others ravaged in Gaul. But a change came when Marius was given command of the Roman army on his victorious return from Africa. The Ambrones and Teutones were defeated decisively at Aqua Sextiae in 102 B.C. and in the next year the same fate befell the Cimbri on the plains of Vercellae.

The influence which the Roman era exerted over the northern countries began to be felt after Caesar's conquest of Gaul, but did not take firm root until the beginning of the Christian era when North Germany, having arrested the northward advance of the Romans, became the channel through which all the benefits of Roman industry and culture percolated to Scandinavia. Within a very short time the cultural picture in Denmark was completely transformed. All parts of Scandinavian soil have yielded up rich findings of Roman bronze, silver and glass, chalices and drinking horns. Of less artistic worth are the bronze statuettes and silver coins depicting Roman gods and goddesses. Funeral practices also succumbed to Roman influence: bodies were buried without cremation in natural heights and no longer in artificial mounds.

The year 10000 B.C. has been given as the approximate time at which human beings may have made their first appearance in Denmark. There remains the baffling question of the original association of the Danish people with the land. As already stated, centuries succeeded Pythias before the interest of Roman and Greek authors in northern countries was revived, as by Tacitus, Strabo and Pliny. It is generally accepted that the bulk of the Danish population of to-day is racially the same as about 4,000 years ago, an assumption largely based on a uniformity of development and a similarity



PTOLEMY'S MAP OF DENMARK OF THE SECOND CENTURY AD

ANGLES AND JUTES

of type ever since the old Stone Age. The Roman and Greek authors who came forward to supplement the theses of Pythias must also be credited with a certain consecutiveness in the light they threw on the characteristics of the northern countries. But even if they succeeded one and all in discerning a people that talked a common language, what of the hundreds of centuries before?

From the writings on a temple at Angora could be read the satisfaction of the Romans at having penetrated to the Jutish Peninsula. The inscription on this temple specially raised by the Galitian people of Angora as a tribute to the Emperor Augustus contains these words: "My fleet sailed over the ocean from the mouth of the Rhine into the land of the Cimbri which no Roman has previously penetrated by sea or by land. The Cimbri, Charudes,¹ Semnones and others of the Germanic race begged for the friendship of myself and the Roman people." This maritime expedition is also mentioned by Strabo and Pliny the Elder. Strabo speaks of the Cimbri as the most famed of northern nations "living on a peninsula" and still in his time owning the land "which they had previously occupied." Both he and Pliny agreed that the people whom the Romans called Cimbri lived in the Peninsula of Jutland.

The *Germania* of Tacitus, albeit geography was his weak point, correctly gives the name of Anglii to the race which lived in the large district between Flensborg Fjord and Slien. A little farther north is the race which Caesar and Tacitus called Eudusii, the Latin equivalent of Jyder (Jutes). But neither Ptolemy's map, the oldest one of Denmark, and correct in its main lines, nor Pliny's references to Scandinavia, offer much enlightenment on conditions in the lands of south and east Jutland. The only thing certain about the word "Scandinavia" is that its termination "avia" must be the Gothic "awi" which means island or coast land. The word Denmark ("Denemearc") first appears in the historical writings of Alfred the Great.

In the centuries leading up to the Middle Ages, Denmark, with her power extending over the Scanian provinces, was

¹ The Charudes have been connected with Hardsyssel, the large district bordering on the Limfjord

larger than at present. The heart of the country was the Danish Isles which were separated from the Jutland Peninsula by the Sound at Middelfart and from Scania by the Öresund. The Great Belt was known in olden times as the "Belt" only. The waters bound Denmark together as was the case in Ancient Greece. The separating line between the Scanian provinces and Sweden was a natural frontier of thick forests and bogs. The land to the south and the west of the frontier was as flat as the soil of Denmark. Zealand consisted of many islands and many fjords. The principal Danish province was the Peninsula of Jutland which extended to the Eider, Denmark's old-time frontier. Adam of Bremen pictured it in gloomy colours as a fruitless land, full of woods and waste heather, and as cultivated only near the frontier; the coast was uninhabited from fear of sea rovers. The whole of the west coast bore little resemblance to its present formation. The land stretched farther out to sea; later a large part of Utland, which was inhabited by Frisians, was overrun by the sea at various times, and a few small islands are the only remnants.

In old times the peoples of the northern countries all spoke the same language which was called the Danish tongue. The same language is found in the rune inscriptions in Schleswig as in the north of Sweden. From about the year A.D. 500 the German and northerner were separated farther from one another because foreign Slavic tribes, who were called Venedi, pressed along the south of the Baltic to Holstein and for centuries thereafter were a hindrance to free interchange between Denmark and Germany. The runes have been best preserved in stones, though many were inscribed on wooden slabs and on metal. Sweden has the oldest rune stones: of the younger variety there are a great number in Norway and Denmark. Records of remarkable events and of famous men have only been occasionally discovered in runes. The most noted monument of this kind are the Jellinge stones erected in honour of Gorm and Thyra Danebod. The greater number of the runes date from the era subsequent to the introduction of Christianity, but the art was still practised through a great part of the Middle Ages.

In the old North, society could only claim one single class—

POSITION OF EARLY MONARCHS

the peasants. The Serf (*u-fri*) was outside the pale of society. He could neither buy nor sell nor give oath before the Court (*ting*). Treated like a beast, he was completely at the mercy of his owner who could kill him at will. He was the lowest of domestic menials: branded as coward, deceiver, traitor—all the qualities that were despised most in northern life. But there were occasions when he was treated as a human being as a reward for true and loyal service to his master or for acts of gallantry in war. The peasant, on the other hand, was a free man in every sense of the word. He had his fixed residence and property. In public affairs he had the final word as the King could take no decision without the approval of his class. Every free man might attend armed the meetings of the Landsting which were held in open places. At the same time there existed a few privileged families to whom were entrusted matters of importance. Free men formed the country's aristocracy who were called on to lead armies in the field, conduct business and deliver sentences in the Landsting or in its auxiliary body the Herredsting.

The position and power of a monarch rested primarily on his soldierly qualities. In those war-like days, the first thing demanded of a king was that he should know how to conduct an army. An arrow handed from house to house was the summons to arms. If no enemy presented himself at home, he must be looked for abroad. Extremely limited as were their powers, the kings derived handsome revenues from crown lands and estates. To the large estates, particularly those in the frontier districts, the King appointed administrators who were called Jarl. Of particular significance was his large suite which ate at his table and slept in his hall. In return for this open hospitality, they were expected to follow their overlord on his campaigns. When the throne fell vacant, the peasants gathered in the *tings* to elect a new king. In general the nearest male relative of the deceased monarch was chosen. The regular order of succession was rarely abandoned because of the fear of internal dissensions. A more distant relative was only preferred when he opened the prospect of a better reign. But eloquence in speech was almost as necessary an asset for a monarch as prowess in war.

MODE OF LIVING IN EARLIEST TIMES

In northern countries women were treated with greater respect than was the case with other races. Although polygamy was not forbidden by the laws, it was not commonly practised, but kings often indulged in it for political reasons. From old records one gathers that conjugal bliss and devotion were the rule rather than the exception. With the progress of years, women's position still further improved. More indeed was expected of her than ordinary domestic accomplishments ; she must also be versed in the preparation of medicinal herbs and in the healing of wounds and illnesses. It was the last Viking period that brought greater independence to women : then, arrayed in manly armour, she took part in man's disputes and often performed brave deeds.

In sumptuousness and general appearance, there was little difference in the homes provided for kings and peasants. Most of them were built of wood, which the great forests yielded in abundance ; they were large and commodious, with a reception-room spacious enough for hundreds of guests, private bedrooms, a stove and a kitchen. Light entered by apertures in the roof and walls which could be closed to the rain. Along the sides of the reception-room were placed rows of benches covered with rugs and cushions and in the middle of each row a seat of honour. Women were seated on a platform at the end of the room facing the door. Chimneys being then unknown, a fire was lit in the middle of the house and the smoke escaped through the open roof. In the poor man's house the same room served for a sleeping-room, a living-room and a kitchen.

In the earliest times the Danes lived on the products of sea and lake as shown by the choice of their habitations. When the woods were partly opened to pasture, cattle-raising became the principal means of subsistence. Agriculture was born with the advance of civilisation and an increase of population. In its earliest stages in Denmark it was confined to the production of barley, oats and rye which was already noticed in the time of Pythias. Though agriculture was the principal occupation, there were other professions which reached a fairly high degree of perfection. There arose a class of goldsmiths and silversmiths ; but their skill was chiefly needed

NORSE POEM HAVAMAAL

for the making of weapons for a nation perpetually at war. War and commerce encouraged naval architecture. Ships that escaped the pirates who roamed the waters would supplement home produce with such things as wheat, salt and clothing materials. Commerce flourished principally in the countries situated near the Baltic and the North Sea. Ordinarily the merchant was himself a privateer. Fish, amber and furs were practically the only articles exported from Denmark. As no money was in use, goods were exchanged for goods or were paid for in gold and silver rings.

No more enlightening picture could be given of the moral principles that guided the men of that age than that presented in the old Norse poem Havamaal :

Wisdom and foresight [it said] must be the guiding stars of life. The son of the chief must be silent, reflecting and brave in all battles, gay and generous towards all until the hour of death. . . . Let no one be without arms for he cannot know if he will have need of them on his journey. . . . The fool believes that he can live always if he avoids a fight, but old age does not recompense as the sword. . . . Rich and poor succumb alike, but an illustrious name never perishes. . . . Richness is as the twinkling of an eye ; it is the most inconstant of friends. A great intelligence is the best provision, for it is the resource of the oppressed. . . . The fool spends the night in meditating on everything : he feels tired when the morning comes and his anxiety is not diminished. One must not be too well informed and must not know one's destiny beforehand, if one is to be free of pre-occupation. . . . If you have a friend who possesses your confidence, mix your thoughts with him, exchange presents and visit him often. Between false friends, friendship is more burning than fire during five days, but on the sixth it is extinguished. The fool believes that every flatterer is his friend. . . . Be good to the unfortunate for their prayers will bring you happiness. Never mock a speaker with white hair ; it is often good to listen to what old men say, and good words often come from the mouth of a wrinkled old man. The son of men carries on his breast a mixture of vice and virtue : no one is so perfect that he is without fault, nor so evil that he is worth nothing.

Nearly all the sources which throw light on the religions practised in the earliest ages date from the time when old beliefs had been discarded and Christianity had been accepted. Also most of the religious poems are Norwegian or Icelandic, and not Danish. The many gods who were created in the

MYTHOLOGY

imagination of men living in the Bronze and Iron Ages, both of which believed in immortality, ceded their places, in the tales of the Icelandic bards, to Odin as the highest among gods. According to many of the sagas, the belief in Odin sprang from lands in the south and east. Snorre maintains that his original home was by the River Don which he deserted for Saxony and then for Odense which bears his name. At the beginning of the ages was born the giant Ymer who was the originator of the Thurses (giants) ; but Odin killed Ymer and his offspring except for one person whose descendants became the enemies of the gods. Of the body of Ymer he created the organised world : of flesh, the earth : of the bones, the mountains : of the blood, the sea : of the brain, the clouds : of the hairs, the trees, and of the eyebrows, the home of man (*mid-gaard*). Thor the son of Odin was the protector of men against the giants : rushing through the heavens in his chariot, he crushed them with a mighty hammer. He appealed most to the heroic instincts of the age in that fame and glory could be won alone by valiant deeds and, as the favoured god of northern warriors, he survived the longest of all the deities. Frigg, Odin's wife, was the goddess of love and fruitfulness.

Odin, as the father of victory and armies, decided from his Hlidskjölf the fate of war and battles. The virgins of Odin, the Valkyries, traversed the air with shining javelins, to succour heroes in their peril and to show them the way to Valhalla. Cowards who had ended their days ingloriously were relegated to the extremities of the north, the Helheim, where ruled the hideous Hele. There they fretted out a miserable existence, condemned to an eternal inactivity. Side by side with this warlike conception of life there was arising another view of life which divided men, not into brave men and cowards, but into good and bad. The example of Danish Saga kings of the time, such as Skjold and Frode, were proof that military valour was not the only aspiration. The gods who were generally known in the north as Asas were indeed the masters of heaven and earth, but they were not immortal : evil portents announced that they would perish one day in the twilight of the gods. So long as there lived Balder, the son of Odin, who was the embodiment of docility, justice and wisdom, the

END OF THE ASAS

Valhalla was free from all danger. But through the evil contrivances of Loké, who belonged both to the races of Thurses and Asas, Balder was slain by his blind brother, Hoed. This event plied the world with evil presentiments. Hele, who guarded the shades of the dead, refused to surrender Balder to the gods. This was the end of the Asas who all fell in a final struggle with the wolf Fenri, the serpent of Midgaard who rose from the sea, and Loké. But a new earth was formed and a new heaven where justice reigned and the Power from on high came to judge and settle disputes. The land rose from the ocean, covered with a brilliant verdure. Balder and all his gods who had been purified by fire returned to the Gimli where the just and faithful enjoyed a happiness without end in a castle covered with a roof of gold and more beautiful than the sun. One sees running through all these traditions the exaltation of war as the highest end: the idea of a moral order was not in universal favour until the coming of Christianity.

CHAPTER II

ALTHOUGH the authentic history of Denmark properly begins with King Godfred, of whom we shall hear anon, the heroic sagas which record the adventures and exploits of earlier kings are not merely mythical but often contain elements of historic truths. Many a time, from the writings of Saxo Grammaticus, Snorre and Beowulf, it is easy to lay hold on incidents which, with the help of other sources, can be set down in history. Of these writers none could compete with the Icelandic Snorre as a master of elegant expression. A saga might lack veracity, but there were few that did not lay hold on man's mind and perhaps alter his whole conception of life.

Whether Dan, according to Saxo, or Skjold, according to Svend Aageson's chronicle, was the first King of Denmark, all sources are in agreement that it was from Skjold that the royal line derived the name of "shieldings" (*Skjoldunger*). One of the most famous tales of Skjold has been forgotten in Denmark but preserved in England. Once upon a time, there came to the island of Zealand a rowless boat with no human being on board but a small sleeping boy. He lay upon a shield and around him were spread fine weapons and dazzling ornaments. The inhabitants of the land took him to their hearts and gave him the name of Shield; and, when he grew up, he became a great king and was much admired for his beneficence and his vigour of mind. As a youth, he was renowned for his physical strength and bravery. Once when hunting he was attacked by a huge bear; the unarmed youth squeezed him in his arms and bound him with his belt. A Saxon Prince Skate, who was famed for his valour, challenged Skjold to a mortal combat for the hand of a young Princess Alvide, whom both were courting. After a great fight, in the presence of the Danish and German armies, Skjold over-

FRODE THE PEACEFUL

came his adversary and married Alvilde who brought him Schleswig and Holstein as her marriage portion. When he died, he was placed in the same boat that brought him to the island, and the boat was left to drift towards the unknown regions whence he came.

Of the many kings ruling under the name of Frode, it is Frode the Peaceful who figures most in Saxo's writings. In his time Christ was born and the Emperor Augustus brought peace to the Roman Empire. So great was the security of Frode's realm that it was said that he could with safety lay a gold ring upon the highway. This king brought happy years to Denmark and ruled over many lands. When on his death the leading men of the land were in fear of an insurrection of the people, his body was embalmed and carried round for three years in a wagon so that it would appear that he was still alive. When the body could hold out no longer, it was interred at Vaerebro in Zealand, where he had wished to rest.

When he died the country possessed no ruler. As his son Fridlev had lived many years in Russia without giving sign of life, Hjarne, for his poetic merits, was appointed to succeed to the throne. Immediately afterwards Fridlev returned and was hailed by the majority of the people. Hjarne sought safety in flight, after receiving a rough handling by Fridlev. At the end of a long period of concealment, he decided to disguise himself as a salt-maker and take service in the King's palace. Declining to take a bath from fear of exposing his wounds, he aroused suspicion and was slain by his enemy in single combat.

A curious legend is attached to Fridlev's name. After failing to capture Dublin during an invasion of Ireland, he resorted to the device of putting inflammable matter on the tails of sparrows which set fire to the thatched roofs of the wooden houses. Whilst the frightened inhabitants were running round extinguishing the flames, the gates were opened and the Danes entered and sacked the town. According to Polydorus Virgil, a similar stratagem was used by an African Prince, Gormund, in a siege of Cirencester.

But the sagas did not only concern themselves with the Danish kings of the islands. Traditions also surrounded the

VERMUND AND UFFE

kings of Jutland, of which Vermund and Uffe were examples. In his old age Vermund begat a son named Uffe who, though of great physical strength, had the air of being stupid and indolent, and never spoke a word. When Vermund began to lose his mind, the Saxon King demanded that the kingdom should be surrendered to him. To Vermund's great surprise, the speechless Uffe offered not only to fight the Saxon King's son but the strongest of his warriors rather than that Jutland should go over to a Saxon king. On the appointed day, the Saxon and Danish armies took up their positions on each side of the Eider, the river boundary. Vermund sat on the river bridge ready to spring into the waters if his son was vanquished. First Saxony's chosen warrior, then the King's son himself, was felled by Vermund's much-prized sword. The Saxons could do nothing but bow in submission and pay taxes to the victorious party.

In the first order of the "shielding" kings of Zealand may be counted Roar and Helge who reigned at the beginning of the sixth century when Beowulf was taking part in a war against the Merovingians. They shared the honours of royalty: Roar, as a peace-lover, ruled the land: Helge, as a born fighter, ruled the seas. Helge was for ever marshalling an army either against the Saxons or the Slavs. This warlike fever went to his head. On one of his expeditions to Sweden he seduced a lady of the name of Thora, who became mother to a daughter named Yrsa. When years later Helge returned to the same land, the mother of Thora, bent on vengeance, induced him to make love to Yrsa, whose parentage he did not divine. He took her as his wife and, only when she presented him with a son, did Thora tell him the truth. Weighed down with grief and shame, Helge set forth on an expedition to the Far East, vowing that he would never return. It is said that he ended his life by throwing himself on his sword.

Next comes the Prince of whom Snorre said: "he was the finest amongst the old-time Kings in manners, liberality and loyalty." This was Rolf Krake, the son of the incestuous union of Helge and Yrsa. To his Court thronged the most famous warriors of the north, among them the Norwegian Bjarke and the Swedish Vigge. So much was Rolf impressed

by the brave mien of Bjarke that he gave him his sister Ruta in marriage. In his Court he kept high estate. At the royal table sat eight hundred warriors whom he regarded as superior to the gods.

Yrsa, after the death of her first husband, married Adils, the King of Sweden, and he and Rolf were bitter enemies. When Rolf and his boydgward were enticed to Upsala on the pretence of visiting the Queen-Mother, a large fire was lit in the hall, which was about setting fire to the clothes of Rolf and his men; but they escaped by throwing their shields on the fire and jumping over it. Warned by Yrsa that the Queen-Mother was plotting his murder, Rolf and his followers mounted their horses, hotly pursued by the Swedish horsemen. Realising that deceit alone would save him from his pursuers, he scattered along the line of retreat the priceless jewels that Yrsa had given him. The temptation was too strong for Adils and his companions. While springing from their horses to pick up the booty, Rolf escaped and Yrsa, who would have been equally distressed if Sweden or Denmark had been vanquished in a war, persuaded her husband to desist from further hostilities.

For many years Rolf lived in peace and quietude, honoured and respected as no other northern monarch. But troubles began afresh with Sweden when Hjarvard, who was married to Skuld, a sister of Rolf, became king. Skuld, unable to bear the mortification that her husband should hold a position inferior to that of her brother, urged him to devise means for seizing Rolf's throne. The noble-minded Rolf innocently acceded to Hjarvard's request that he should be allowed to postpone for three years the payment of tribute due to Denmark. Hjarvard used the money in enlisting troops and collecting ships. The three years over, he arrived at Lejre, with a large fleet and with the ostensible purpose of paying the tribute, and was hospitably received. Intoxication overcame most of the attendants at a sumptuous banquet that was to do honour to the distinguished visitors. Hjarvard and his party, however, were careful to be less overcome than the others. The moment was seized for calling in the men who were lying in wait on the Swedish ships. Vigge warned his master of the danger, but Rolf was too far gone to take notice. Despite a

HAGBARD AND SIGNE

desperate resistance, he and his guardsmen were all overpowered and slain. But the faithful Vigge, who had vowed long since to take the life of any that murdered his master, was quick to take vengeance. Summoned before Hjarvard to surrender the bodyguard, he snatched from him the sword on which he was to swear a new allegiance and ran its blade through the traitor's body.

The memory of Rolf Krake endured through many centuries. It was more his nobility of mind than his physical strength and bravery that earned for him lasting respect. Famous kings like Oluf the Saint declared that none of the old-time princes could be compared to him, and the old poets vied with one another in singing his praises.

One of the most famous of sagas and not the least romantic is the story of Hagbard and Signe. During the reign of King Sigar, three Norwegian princes came to visit the Danish Court, and one of them, Hagbard, won the heart of Signe, the King's daughter. As contemporary custom debarred a marriage union unless the suitor could present the titles of a valiant warrior, Hagbard left Lejre on a freebooting expedition, leaving behind him his two brothers who preferred the gaiety of the Court. During a drunken fray, the two Norwegian princes were slain by their Danish hosts. In an age when a breach of hospitality was an unpardonable offence, the slaying of the two princes in these circumstances called for retribution. On hearing the news, Hagbard immediately returned to the Danish Court clad as a female warrior. Signe at once recognised him, but one of her handmaidens, who felt suspicious of Hagbard's swarthy hands, betrayed him to the King. When night came on, Signe dismissed her attendants with the order that he should be given, as an honoured guest, the room next to her apartment.

The light of morning began to dawn before the lovers could persuade themselves to separate. In the meantime spies were sent forth in search of the female warrior. On emerging from the apartments of the Princess, Hagbard was arrested by the watches. He defended himself so fiercely that many lives were lost before he could be overpowered. Without further ado, Hagbard was consigned to the gallows. Signe, resolving

HAMLET

to die with her lover, set fire to her apartments so that he might see, as he was led out to death, the flames ascending and consuming all that he valued on earth. Facing the gallows Hagbard shouted in ecstasy : " Swing me forthwith in the air. The crackling flames proclaim the covenant of our love. The days shall come that shall bring back to memory our love and our death."

Another famous saga of Jutland tells the story of Amled (Hamlet). Gervendel, an under-king of Jutland had two sons, Horvendel and Fenge. A fine warrior was Horvendel, whose bravery won him the hand of Geruth, a daughter of the Danish King, Rörik. But his good fortune and popularity aroused the envy of Fenge, who killed him, and compelled Geruth to be his wife.

Amled, the son of Geruth by her first marriage, believed that, in feigning madness, his life would be in less danger from his stepfather. He would lie and roll about in ashes, and his speech seemed as mad as his demeanour. The suspicious Fenge decided to put Amled's madness to the test. Conceiving the idea that Amled would be more likely to unmask himself in the presence of his mother, Fenge arranged an interview while one of his men lay listening outside concealed in a heap of straw. Amled, on spying the object as he made his entrance, suspected treachery, behaved like a cock and sprang upon the heap crowing. He drove his sword through the body, boiled it in a kettle and threw the remnants to the pigs. Entering the room, he shouted at his mother : " Thou shameless woman, thou has taken thy husband's murderer as thy husband. With good reason feign I madness, for I can well see that he who murdered his brother will also attempt his son's life. Therefore my madness will give me protection until a better hour comes. But thou, mother, shouldst shed tears not over my madness but over thine own disgrace."

Fenge, who feared Amled as much as he was forced to respect King Rörik, decided on another method of being rid of him, and chose the King of England as his instrument. He was sent on a journey to England with two companions who bore the written request to the King that he should be killed. But by the time that Amled arrived at his destination, he had murdered

BATTLE OF BRAAVALLAHEDE

his two companions and, in place of the rune ordering his death, was written the request from Fenge that the King would give Amled two companions and his daughter in marriage. These wishes were faithfully fulfilled.

A year later Amled returned to Jutland, having previously spread the rumour that he was dead. While his return was being celebrated with wine and mirth at a great banquet, all the guests except Amled became so inebriated that they all fell asleep where they were. Covering them with carpets, Amled set fire to the hall and all Fenge's men were burnt alive or suffocated. He then went to Fenge's chamber and slew him with his sword. Before a gathering of his people on the following morning he excused his behaviour as having been forced on him by his desire to escape Fenge's evil designs. The people recognised that Amled had behaved with correct cunning and chose him as their head.

After a time the Danish royal line on the male side became extinct and every province elected its own king or administrator. On the female side there remained Gyrith, but her marriage to Halfdan, who was not of royal birth, was childless. Halfdan sought the advice of the gods in a place of sacrifice at Upsala and was told that he must first make atonement to Odin for the murder of his half-brother, whom he had slain unwittingly in a war between the Swedes and the Russians. Very soon a son was born and was called Hilditönn. Under the protection of Odin, Hilditönn as a full-grown man fought and slew one after another of the kings who had stolen Danish lands. He then carried his sword to Sweden: two of the three princes who ruled the country were killed and the third, Ingeld, made peace with him. His victories even extended to the Rhine. They brought such tranquillity to the Danish kingdom that no war was fought for fifty years. It was the desire of the gods that Hilditönn, when old and nearly blind, should end his days gloriously on the battlefield. This generous thought was gratified when, after seven years' preparation, the mixed armies of Hilditönn and King Ring of Sweden confronted one another at Braavallahede in East Gotland. Ring gave the signal that the fight should not be begun before Hilditönn was seen standing in his chariot and surrounded by his banners.

Whilst the slaughtering was at its highest, Hilditönn threw himself into the tumult of battle, and Odin felled him with his club. When Ring heard of Hilditönn's fall, he gave orders for an armistice.

The story of Regner Lodbrog provides a somewhat thrilling end to the long drama of saga kings and heroes. It was particularly his love affairs and his fights for wives that made him notorious. Polygamy was no longer the vogue, but Regner revived it in an astonishing manner. At Guldalen near Trondhjem lived a female valkyrie named Ladgerd, who was guarded by a powerful bear and a snappish dog. Regner killed them both and won the amazon. The beautiful Thora Borgarhjort or the "hind of the castle" was the next object of his attentions, but was a less easy conquest. Guarded by two immense serpents which roamed round the castle, she had been promised by her father, King Herröd, to the man who killed them. No sooner was this known to Regner than he wettened his breeches to make himself immune against the vipers' bites. Having transpierced the animals with a spike he took possession of Thora, who became the mother of Eric and Agnar.

After the early death of Thora, Regner went on an expedition to drown his grief. On coming to Lindesnaes in Norway he was told of a lady named Kraka who was yet more beautiful than Thora and he bade her come to him the following day, clothed or unclothed. Kraka duly appeared wrapped in a fishing-net with a dog as a companion. Her charm and intelligence so much impressed Regner that he desired to elope with her, but Kraka would only consent if he returned again in the same mood. She was finally led home to Lejre to be his queen. She presented him with four sons, of which the eldest was Ivar the Boneless. Of Regner's numerous male progeny many survived to conquer in foreign lands.

Regner's fickle temperament was to embroil him with King Öjstein in Upsala. He no sooner became betrothed to Ingeborg, the King's daughter, because she was thought to be a more suitable partner than a lady of humble birth like Kraka, than he altered his mind on discovering that Kraka was in fact a lady of high descent. Öjstein, highly incensed, began to

DEATH OF REGNER LODBROG

attack Denmark, and of Regner's sons, Agnar was killed in battle and Eric taken prisoner. Vowing vengeance, the brave Kraka, clad as a female warrior and with her three remaining sons, led an expedition to the Baltic in the course of which Öjstein was slain. Not to be outdone by his sons, Regner equipped two new warships and with only 500 men set off to attack Northumbria against the advice of Kraka. The two ships stranded, but Regner and his men were able to land and plunder around. When finally discovered by King Ella all were slain save Regner. According to tradition, he refused to reveal his identity, was thrown into a snake-pen and bitten to death.

CHAPTER III

AT the end of the eighth century, Christianity was drawing nearer to the frontiers of Denmark. It may be asked why it found its way to Denmark 300 years after the Franks had thrown off heathenism and about 200 years after the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms had been christianised. Denmark, it is true, was far separated from these lands and no conversion could be expected from the Baltic races, for both the Slavs and the Finns were heathens. The more likely explanation is that, of all changes in a changing Denmark, it was the introduction of Christianity that aroused the longest and most obstinate resistance for the reason that its principles challenged all the habits of thought that had been inbred in the northern countries for centuries long. The example of Charlemagne of baptising by force people who were Denmark's neighbours did not incline the Danes the more to the new religion. Moreover, the work of the Christian missions, as fostered by Pope Gregory, showed little living force. A slow growth was therefore inevitable.

Despite these forebodings, Willibrord, fresh from his successful conversion of the Saxons and Frisians, decided to depart from his seat at Utrecht for the land of the "wild" Danes. He was warmly received by King Ongendus who, however, refused to be baptised, and the nation as a whole showed no enthusiasm for the new doctrine. But Willibrord received permission to take away with him thirty Danish boys, to whom he gave a Christian education. A hundred years later missionaries returned to Denmark, but at a time when the political position of Denmark in relation to the outside world had completely changed. Charlemagne's conquests had brought him near the frontiers of Denmark. If the Saxons and Frisians were to be kept rigorously within the Christian fold, then the "wild" Danes must also be converted to it. The Danes, however, could not rid themselves of the fear, also common to

GODFRED AND CHARLEMAGNE

the Saxons, that Christianity and subservience to a foreign ruler might be one and the same thing.

From all appearances, the beginning of the thousand years' conflict between Danes and Germans was drawing nigh. The first symptoms showed themselves in the time of the great King Godfred who not only ruled over all Danish lands from the North Sea to Scania and parts of Norway, but also threatened Charlemagne in his own territory. The expulsion by the Emperor of a vast number of Saxons from their homes and their replacement by the Obotrites, a Slavic tribe in East Holstein, and his threat to deprive Godfred of the handsome revenues of the Frisian trade, so infuriated Godfred that he made war on the Obotrites at the convenient moment when the Emperor was hard pressed by events in Bohemia and Hungary. In a conciliatory mood he signed a four-years' armistice with Charlemagne which he employed in gathering to his standard all the pagan forces of the North. Though he again resorted to arms, he was content to plunder the coasts of Mecklenburg and once again to menace the Emperor. On the northern side of the Eider he threw up a rampart which was known as the Danevirke and was sufficiently formidable to induce Charlemagne to make a halt near the present town of Itzehoe. When Godfred had been assassinated while on a marauding expedition to Frisia, Hemming, his successor, signed a peace with Charlemagne which recognised the Eider as the frontier.

After Charlemagne's death in A.D. 814, Louis the Pious showed no less zeal in encouraging the propagation of the gospel amongst the northern Germans and the Danes. But the proselytising efforts of Archbishop Ebo of Rheims and the monk Halitgar, who were sent to Denmark by the Emperor, had no lasting consequences. After Hemming's death, Denmark became the prey to civil disturbances caused by rival claims to the throne of Denmark. The struggle was fought between Godfred's descendants and those of an earlier king named Harald. Those who were expelled from the country sought refuge with the Emperor. One of these fugitives, Harald Klak, was promised the active support of Louis if he adopted the Christian faith. On giving a willing consent, he was baptised with great ceremony at Ingelheim, near Mainz, and was granted

THE MISSIONARY WORK OF ANSGAR

diverse domains in the north of Germany, but at the price of his accepting the position of the Emperor's vassal.

The immediate consequence of Harald's conversion was the arrival in Denmark of the learned and pious Ansgar. He was accompanied by Autbert, an equally fervent disciple. After an ineffective visit—Denmark was again in an unsettled condition—Ansgar was transferred to Sweden, where he enjoyed the favour and patronage of King Björn. Later the Archbishopric of Hamburg was specially created for him. The Archbishopric was then large in size but small in substance, and the unfriendliness of the Danish King towards Ansgar prevented him from setting his foot across the Eider during the first years. In Germany too the Emperor and his sons were at the time involved in an unseemly family dispute, so that here too Ansgar could look for no more help. The final blow fell when the Viking movement broke forth in full force. In 845 the Danish King Horik attacked and entered Hamburg. The town, the church, and the cloister with its rich library which had been presented by the Emperor—all were sacked and burnt. Five years before had died Louis the Pious, Ansgar's benefactor. When Ansgar returned to Denmark in 854 from Bremen, where he had been last installed, he saw new dangers ahead of him. The attitude of King Horik, who had begun his reign with the persecution of the Christians, was at first doubtful, but he was soon to yield to Ansgar's persuasions. From this moment Ansgar began to reap the rewards of patient suffering. He was allowed to build a church at Ribe and to carry on his work unhindered. In his ageing days he could rejoice that the roots of Christendom had at last been laid in Denmark. He found his greatest happiness in the succouring of the poor. Many sick were brought to him and healed, it was said, by the laying on of hands and prayers. His life was strenuous and constantly exposed to danger. He denied himself all comforts and, only in his old age, could he be persuaded to mingle wine with water. He died on the 3rd February 865, and his body was buried in St. Peter's Church at Bremen where he had ministered for several years. He was canonised by the Pope as the Apostle of the North.

For an account of the earliest invasions of Britain by the

EARLIEST INVASIONS OF VIKINGS

Vikings, it is necessary to turn to the pages of Bede, who is the earliest and best authority. He wrote his history more than 200 years after the Saxons, Jutes and Angles descended on Britain, in answer to an appeal from King Vortigern for assistance against the Picts and Scots. The last Roman legions had left Britain at the beginning of the fifth century. At the head of a small fleet of three ships the brothers Hengist and Horsa arrived in the island of Thanet. But Horsa was killed in a fight against the Britons and it remained to Hengist to collect more arms and men before he could set up his kingdom in Kent. He and his followers were neither Angles nor Saxons, but Jutes, as can be gathered from the Kentish dialect and from Bede describing them as "Jutae." They did not occupy Kent alone. In Bede's time they were still living in the Isle of Wight and in a part of the Hampshire Coast. The Saxons probably arrived thirty to forty years after the Jutes: namely, the "South Saxons" under Aelle and the "West Saxons" under Cerdic and Cynric. They founded the kingdoms of the later Sussex and Wessex and within a hundred years the whole of the coast between the mouths of the Thames and the Severn were in foreign hands. It was about the same time that the Angles, according to tradition, were little by little laying hold of nearly all the eastern parts of England: first East Anglia, then Northumbria, and finally Mercia.

It has often been debated whether the Angles who invaded England came from Angel in Schleswig. To Denmark it is a point of historic interest. Proof that many of the Angles came from their native soil in Schleswig would give added importance to the Eider as the natural outlet to the West. Bede's statement that the province of Angel bore in his time a desolate appearance is largely exaggerated. Small bands of Angles and Jutes emigrated to the mouth of the Elbe at the end of the fourth century and joined the Saxons in the invasion of England in the following century. There were also invasions from North Germany and direct from Schleswig and Jutland which widened the difference between the Danes and the Germans. The population of Schleswig became more Jutish, the Saxons more German, because the habitual exodus of Jutes to Saxony through Schleswig came to an end.

THE RETURN OF THE VIKINGS

The general view may be accepted that the Angles came both from the Peninsula and from their settlements in Germany.

More than three centuries passed before the Vikings renewed their activities and with far greater determination. At the end of the eighth and at the beginning of the ninth century they were spreading destruction in Northumbria, Scotland, Wales and in the French province of Aquitaine. It may be doubted whether the Danes ever took part in these expeditions for they first appear as a military power in 834 when they attacked and plundered the province of Frisia. They were tempted at the same time to try their fortunes in England. It may be generally said that the Danes, with few exceptions, confined their operations during this age of adventure to lands in the west and south-west.

After a series of piratical raids on the southern coast of England, which ended with the pillaging of London by the Vikings in 842, England was left in peace for a decade, during which the Danes could continue their ravages of Frankish territory that had begun with the attacks on Ouessant in the year 814.

Having laid in ruins the town and cathedral of Nantes, they turned towards Spain where the Moors proved too much for them. At the end of a year's exciting adventures in the Iberian Peninsula and on the North African coast, what remained of the expedition retreated to the mouth of the Gironde. In 845 the army of Charles the Bald was put to rout at Chaussy by the pirate King Regner Lodbrog, who had arrived on the Seine with 120 Danish ships. Though baulked of his attempt to capture Paris, Regner was able, through the supineness of the Frankish King, to make a dignified and remunerative retreat. The following years provide a long record of renewed Viking attacks from which few parts of Francia escaped. The climax was reached in 885 when an immense Viking army drew up before the walls of Paris which was connected with the river banks by only two bridges. After three vain attempts to capture the city, the swollen Seine swept away the wooden bridge and the river route was opened to the Danes. But the spirit of the garrison remained unbroken and King Sigfred and his followers, whose patience was now exhausted, were bought off

TREATY OF ST. CLAIR-SUR-EPTE

with a bribe. For a few years the Frankish kingdom was freed from the terror of the Vikings.

The respite was only broken when a force of considerable strength established itself securely in the lower basin of the Seine.

In the summer of 911 it advanced on Chartres under the command of Rollo.¹ The bishop, aided by Count Robert of Paris and other princes, raised a force which won an overwhelming victory over the Danes and forced them to raise the siege. But the invaders remained in quiet and undisputed possession of the coastal lands and both sides were disposed towards a peaceful settlement. At this time the West Franks were ruled by Charles III to whom posterity, with some injustice, has given the name of Simple. In his helplessness either to preserve his kingdom as a united whole or to eject the Danes from their settlement on the lower Seine, he decided to keep peace with Rollo by surrendering these lands to him as a fief. In a treaty signed at St. Clair-sur-Epte at the end of 911 Charles granted to Rollo the territory known as Haute Normandie together with the ignominious right to plunder in Brittany. After being baptised a Christian, Rollo assumed the name of Robert and displayed his zeal for the new faith by giving many presents to churches and cloisters. He was fortunate in surviving many attempts to deprive him of his lands, before he died about the year 927 and was succeeded by his son William Longsword.

The Danes, on returning to life after a ten-years' pause, could make little headway against the southerners of England, and by 861 were only in possession of East Kent. Here they were not allowed to rest for long, for they were expelled from Thanet, their headquarters, four years later. Having failed to subdue the southern lands, they concentrated their aims on the subjugation of the weaker parts of the realm, East Anglia and

¹ The view that Rollo, the first Duke of Normandy, was the son of a powerful Danish chieftain is founded largely on Dudo's Norman history. Norwegian traditions claim that Rollo was Ganger Rolf, a noted Viking, who was outlawed by Harald Fairhair of Norway. Whatever faith is placed in Dudo's writings, neither in the Norman histories nor in the sagas is evidence provided that Ganger Rolf ever obtained power in France (see Johannes Steenstrup in *Danmarks Riges Historie*).

ALFRED THE GREAT

Northumbria, with Regner Lodbrog's sons as their leaders. When East Anglia had been secured against invasion, this large Danish army took possession of York without serious difficulty and, with it, the province of Deira. One next finds them in Nottingham where they were to meet an army led by Ethelred, the King of Wessex, and his brother Alfred. No battle was fought and the Danes, after being rewarded for their pains, returned to Deira. Two years later they were back in East Anglia. Here they joined battle with Edmund, King of Anglia, who, after being decisively defeated, was butchered to death, it is said, by Regner's sons. Now that nearly all the eastern part of England had fallen to the Danes, they attempted to lay hold on Wessex but were severely routed by the English in the battle of Ashdown of 871. Yet further encounters in the same year left the Danes in their former position.

At this critical moment, Ethelred died and was succeeded by his brother, Alfred the Great. It was of happy augury for the new King's reign that he was able, in its first year, to force a withdrawal of the Danes from Wessex. As Alfred could do no more than consolidate his position in the reconquered territory, Mercia was left to the mercy of Halfdan's army which had no sooner conquered the province than it turned northwards to crush the Northumbrians. The Danelaw once firmly established in England by Halfdan, it was the turn of the Danish "western army" and Guthrum's army to add to their conquests in the South. Fortune was now to favour Alfred. A large Danish fleet that had come to reinforce a Danish army besieged in Exeter was destroyed by a violent tempest off Swansea and Guthrum was forced to surrender. He however withdrew, against his promised word, to Gloucester. In the following year Wessex was devastated by the returning army of Guthrum, who had meanwhile been joined by his brother Ubbe. Alfred found himself fleeing from place to place, hiding in woods and swamps, but in reality organising victory. He finally took shelter in the Isle of Athelney where he laid his plans against the heathen armies. Elated by the news that Ubbe had been defeated and slain when besieging a fort in Devonshire, he ordered all loyal men in Hampshire, Wiltshire and Somerset to rally to his side at Easter time. The great battle fought at

PEACE OF WEDMORE

Edington in 878 proved that the Anglo-Saxons had not lost their fighting spirit. The Danes sued for peace at Wedmore, and Guthrum and thirty of his leading men came to Alfred to be baptised. By the Peace of Wedmore, or the Treaty of Chippenham, the Danes were left in undisturbed possession of the Danelaw, a territory which stretched from Essex and London to the Tees in the North. When Guthrum caused further trouble, the boundaries of the southern Danelaw were revised in Alfred's favour; he took the North London area together with the district of Hendrica. Part of the text of this second Peace between Alfred and Guthrum has been preserved.

Alfred's strategical gifts were never put to a higher test than in the three years' war in which he was engaged against both the Danish army returning from the siege of Paris and the Viking fleet of Hastein who had tried his fortunes in the Somme and the Loire. With few exceptions the Danes were routed on every field of battle. The settlers in the Danelaw were now convinced that further opposition to the resolute King would bring them no further gains, and withdrew to East Anglia and Northumbria. Alfred the Great died in October 899. By preserving Wessex from the Danes this great king had secured for posterity Anglo-Saxon civilisation.

On the Danish kings that ruled Denmark in the years immediately before and after the coming of the tenth century, there reigns much uncertainty. It is known that in 870 a Saxon army, moving towards the Elbe with hostile intentions, was attacked and routed by the Danes. For the next fifty years no Danes dared cross the Elbe. At the end of this period Gorm the Old was firmly established as the ruler of Denmark. At the age of 50 Gorm had married Thyra, the daughter of a Jutish Jarl and granddaughter of King Athelstan of England. Her noble character and her natural gifts, while attaining a general ascendancy over Gorm, were helpless in overcoming his hatred of Christianity. At this time the southern part of Schleswig was occupied by a Swedish Prince Oluf; but, after an unhappy dispute with the German Emperor, the Swedes were conquered by the Danes and this little kingdom annexed.

Thyra is chiefly remembered for the erection, under her

GORM THE OLD AND THYRA

personal supervision, of a great rampart on a line with the fortifications built by Godfred. It was also given the name of the "Danevirke" and earned her the name of "Danebod" (comfort of the Danes). Her noble qualities were apparently shared by her elder son Canute Dana-ast who was worshipped by his father and adored by the nation. There is a late tradition that, when Canute started on a predatory excursion to Ireland, Gorm made the foolish oath that the person who announced to him the death of his son would at once be put to death. Canute was mortally wounded by an Irish missile while bathing on a warm sunny day. Thyra alone was told, for no one dared break the news to the King. It needed all Thyra's presence of mind to avert a useless sacrifice of life. At even-time the dining-room was hung with blue cloth and she herself and her court ladies clad themselves in mourning. As he was led to the banquet, old Gorm, who was almost blind, noticed the unusual quiet and asked what it meant. Thyra answered: "O King, you had two falcons, the one white, the other grey. The white one has flown far away to distant lands, a swarm of crows fell on it and plucked its feathers so that it could live no longer. But the grey one has returned and will capture birds for your table." Gorm broke out: "As sure as Denmark now mourns, it is my son Canute who is dead." "That you said, O King, and not I," replied Thyra, "but it is true what you say." The shock was too great for the old King, and he died the next day.

On the great cenotaph at Jellinge in Jutland,¹ where Gorm was buried, there is a Runic inscription which reads: "Harald the King set up this memorial to Gorm, his father, and Thyra, his mother; that Harald who won for himself all Denmark and Norway and who made the Danes Christian." These words of Harald Bluetooth, Gorm's successor, are no idle claim, for he is generally credited as the founder of Danish unity even if his main success lay in consolidating the kingdom bequeathed to him by his father. Harald gave a firmer foundation to his rule in raising Denmark to the level of civilised Christian states. Ansgar's place had now been taken by Unni, the Archbishop of Bremen who, with a large retinue

¹ See p. 8

ENMITY BETWEEN NORWAY AND DENMARK

of clergy, preached in Jutland and later in the Islands. On his death in 936, the missionary work in Denmark was continued under his successor, the young Prince, Archbishop Adeldag. As a former chaplain to Maud, the mother of Otto the Great, he was socially in a position to wield greater influence than any of his predecessors. He established three new bishoprics : in Schleswig, Ribe and Aarhus. Of equal import to his ministrations was the conversion of Harald as told to us by the Saxon Widukind. At an evening feast where he and the priest Poppo were present, the remark was passed that Christ might well be a God, but that the heathen gods were older and mightier. Poppo declared that there was only one God in three Persons and that all other gods were the devil's work. The King asked him whether he was ready to prove this by a miracle. Next morning Poppo was seen holding a red-hot iron in his hand, unhurt and unflinching. The King and many of his men were forthwith baptised and many thousands followed their example.

The relations between Denmark and Norway, which had been quiescent during the reign of Harald Fairhair of Norway, became involved after the succession of his son Eric Bloodaxe. For political reasons he was married to Gunnhild, a sister of Harald Gormssön (Bluetooth). Encouraged by his wife, he put to death his half-brothers who were threatening his rights of succession. Of these Haakon, who was being educated at the Court of King Athelstan, alone escaped. It was no wonder, therefore, that Eric and his family, hated and suspected by all, were soon expelled from the country.

On the death of the exiled Eric in England, the scene again shifted, for his sons arrived in Denmark to enlist the support of Harald Bluetooth. Taking offence at the patronage accorded to them by the Danish Court, Haakon avenged himself by making sundry descents on the Danish coasts. When he was finally brought low in a naval battle near Bergen, Harald Greycloak, the most valiant of Eric's sons, became ruler of Norway. Now that he was all-powerful he was to forget his benefactor and make himself loathed by his atrocities, particularly by the act of burning to death the powerful Sigurd Jarl who had helped to expel his father.

STRUGGLES BETWEEN GERMANY AND DENMARK

At this time Harald Bluetooth was anxious to rid himself of the presence of his nephew, Guld-Harald, who had returned unexpectedly to Denmark to claim a share of the kingdom. Sigurd's son Haakon was no less intent on putting out of the way the murderer of his father. On these happy premises it was agreed between them that Harald Greycloak should be lured to Denmark in order to be murdered. Thus Guld-Harald could be removed from Denmark and fill the vacant place in Norway. But the astute Haakon wanted Norway for himself. No sooner had he slain in battle Harald Greycloak than he proceeded to kill Guld-Harald. When the whole of Norway had been conquered by arms, Haakon was appointed Regent, whilst Harald Bluetooth allowed his son Sweyn, the future conqueror of England, to administer the southern provinces.

Constant interferences in the affairs of Denmark by successive German Emperors, as heads of all the princes in Europe and protectors of the Christian faith, were the root cause of the antagonistic struggles between Denmark and Germany which troubled the reigns of Gorm the Old and Harald Bluetooth. The brittle relationship between these two countries was vividly exposed after the death of Otto I. About the year 974, Otto II invaded Denmark and assaulted the Danevirke. With the help of the Norwegians under Haakon Jarl, the German attacks were courageously repulsed and the Danevirke, according to tradition, only fell when the Germans had set on fire the wooden rampart. Harald was driven back to the Limfjord, where negotiations were opened. The conversion of Harald became complete; a cathedral was constructed on the pagan site of Odense and at Harald's orders the Church of the Holy Trinity was built at Roskilde. Whilst Otto had been diverted to the south in his fatal campaign against the Greeks and Saracens, the Danes were able to recover the fortifications and the castle which had been built by the Emperor near the Eider.

From now onwards the clouds descended lower and lower upon Harald's head. Haakon Jarl had usurped all Harald's royal rights in Norway and had refused firmly to make Christians of the Norwegian people. Harald himself could

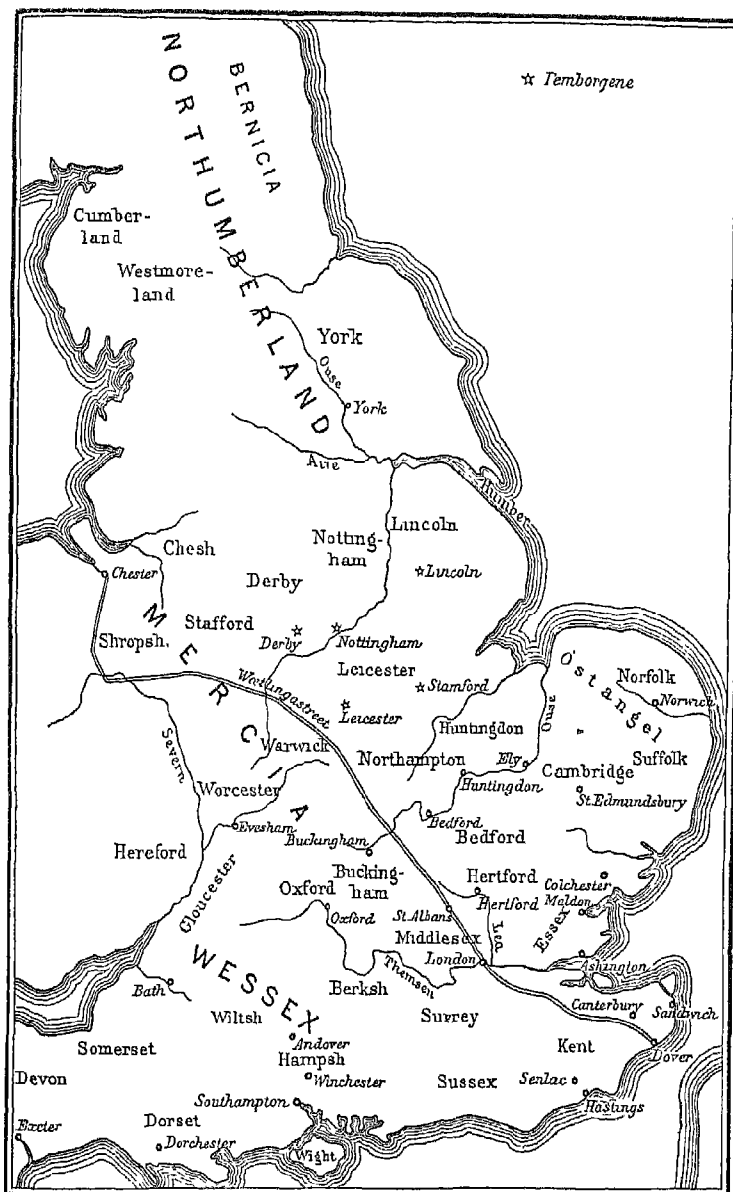
RECONQUEST OF DANISH LANDS IN ENGLAND

not resist casting a covetous eye on the Oder, which presented a fitting outlet for Danish trade, but he was the first to encroach on the territory of the Wends in building the castle of Jomsborg on the island of Wollin. By the Wends is meant all the people who lived in the southern stretch of the Baltic from Kiel to the Vistula and were actually only a part of all the Slavic races who had spread westwards from Russia in centuries past. This Danish military outpost became famous as the centre of many exciting events. So exclusively guarded were the precincts of the castle that no woman might enter therein and none of its armed occupants might leave it for more than three days.

The last years of Harald are wrapt in obscurity. They are known to have been clouded by his suspicions of his son Sweyn Forkbeard, whose great popularity with the nation and intriguing nature threatened his banishment from the throne. The year of Harald's death and the manner in which he met it are uncertain. It is generally accepted that he was wounded in a battle with his son and that he died at Jomsborg about the year 986.

Alfred the Great could have scarcely conceived that, only twelve years after his death when Edward the Elder ruled, one single battle fought at Tettenhall in Staffordshire should place the Danes on the defence and that, a few years later, the whole of the Danelaw should pass into English hands. Edward would have found his task less easy but for the lack of corporate unity in the Danelaw and the attractions of the new Danish colony in Normandy. To the individual Dane it mattered little who was his overlord so long as he was left in peace. In adding the Northumbrian Danelaw to his conquests, Edward was aided by the existing rivalries between the Danes and Norwegians for possession of the land. Under the four kings, Alfred the Great, Edward the Elder, Athelstan and Edred, the whole of Danish territory was won back for England, though not without many bitter struggles. But subjugation had still left the Danes in possession of their own laws and customs.

It was the Swedish Vikings who, under the Swedish Guthmund Stegitansson and Oluf Tryggvason, a future king of



Map of England in the 10th and 11th Centuries.

SWEYN CONQUERS ENGLAND

Norway, were the first to threaten seriously the stability of the English kingdom when they arrived in the Thames at the head of a fleet of ninety-three vessels. Having penetrated through half of East Anglia, they came to grips at Maldon with Brihtnoth, the Duke of the East Saxons, and here in 991 was fought the battle which for the first time reversed the long sequence of English victories. Bribes and the menace of Ethelred's fleet sufficed, however, to drive the enemy northwards, and bribes also played their part in minimising the effects of the freebooting raids perpetrated by the Norwegian Oluf and Sweyn, King of Denmark. Having been bought off with £1,600, Oluf consented to be baptised with Ethelred as his godfather. The conversion was only short-lived, for a few years later Oluf returned to pillage Wales, Cornwall and Dorset, finally establishing the Isle of Wight as his base of operations.

From now onwards, Sweyn holds the field as the conquering hero who, with his young son, Canute, frequently at his side, was to bring the whole of England under his sway. When he returned from Norway to England in 1002 he came as the merciless avenger of the murder of his sister who had been a victim of the massacres of St. Brice's Day ordered in desperation by the senseless King Ethelred.

In the following years no part of southern England escaped the onslaught of the Vikings. It was not Sweyn but Thorkel the Tall that led the fleet which attacked England in 1009 with the Isle of Wight as his starting-point. The whole of East Anglia and southern England was devastated, towns were burnt and their inhabitants slain. In September 1011, the Danes entered and sacked Canterbury. The Archbishop, the same that had baptised Oluf Tryggvason, was coolly murdered on his refusing to pay a ransom, though Thorkel offered gold and silver, everything except his ship, to save the Archbishop's life. The end of all this bloodshed was the signing of peace with Ethelred in return for an immense tribute. The ground was now laid for the final conquest of England. In the autumn of 1013 came King Sweyn with a great fleet, determined to remove the usurper Thorkel. Only London held out for a short time. Ethelred's Queen Emma fled with her

ROYAL MARRIAGES

young sons to her brother in Normandy. Thither soon followed Ethelred, friendless and deserted by all. Sweyn was not left long to enjoy his triumphs for he died at the beginning of 1014.

The marriages in which the Royal Families of Norway, Sweden and Denmark were involved during Sweyn's reign were a mixed blessing. Sigrid, who married Sweyn after the death of Eric of Sweden, incited him to dislodge Oluf Tryggvason from his Norwegian throne. A lover's quarrel between the two seems to have been the stirring motive, for Oluf had refused to bestow his favours on this amorous queen unless she first submitted to the ordeal of baptism. For her refusal to forsake her father's faith she was rewarded with a slap on the face. Of all her lovers, Sweyn was preferred as the most worthy of her attentions. Sweyn, be it noted, had been first married to Gunnhild, a sister of the future King Bogislaus of Poland; he had cast her aside despite the fact that she had presented him with many children. To complete this matrimonial circle, Bogislaus was married to Thyra, the sister of Sweyn. Immediately after her marriage, Thyra fled disgusted to Denmark, but could not stay there from fear of her brother's anger. She therefore went to Norway and married King Oluf.

From this follows the sad tale of a neglected marriage dowry and of the consequent downfall of a monarch.

In her hasty flight from Bogislaus and with no thought of re-marriage, Thyra had omitted to bring with her to Norway her marriage portion. When finally married to Oluf, she persuaded him to go to Poland to obtain possession of the lands she had been given. Olaf forthwith departed for Poland with sixty of his best ships. The negotiations were entirely successful and Queen Thyra's wishes were fulfilled. Meanwhile Sigrid was urging her husband to intercept and overwhelm Olaf on his return journey. Sweyn had not forgiven Olaf for marrying Thyra without his consent and became a willing partner to the scheme. The new King Oluf of Sweden was invited to take part. A battle was joined in the Sound and was for long left undecided. It only ended when Oluf Tryggvason's giant ships gave up resistance. Oluf sprang overboard and most of his men after him. Queen

BATTLE OF ASHINGDON

Thyra died of grief a few days after the fight. The victors divided Norway amongst themselves: Eric Jarl of Norway obtained the north and western parts, King Sweyn the lands in the south and east and King Oluf the district to the north of Götaelven and some of the counties in Tröndelagen.

On Sweyn's death in 1014, there could be no other successor than Harald, his eldest son, who had already administered the country in his father's absence. In England events took another turn after Sweyn's death. Of the qualities of young Canute little was then known. Broken as was the morale of the Anglo-Saxons by long persecution, it revived considerably after Sweyn's disappearance. Loyal Englishmen invited Ethelred to return to take up arms against the Danes. It is true that, in the first moments of release, a revived movement could only depend on London and the adjoining counties. Meanwhile young Canute was hastily assembling a large fleet and army which arrived in England in September 1015. When Ethelred died the following year, Canute had captured nearly the whole of England. But in the moment of triumph he was to discover in Edmund Ironside, the new English King, an opponent who, but for an act of treachery, might well have proved his master. After a number of victories over the Danes, Edmund seemed certain of ultimate success when he drew battle with them at Ashingdon in Essex. The day was lost to England through the cowardly flight of Eadric the Grasper of West Mercia. Unwilling to risk further defeat, Edmund agreed in a meeting at Olney near Deerhurst to cede to Canute all Mercia and the Danelaw, whilst holding Wessex for himself. On Edmund's death, 1016, the whole country rallied round Canute, and it was decided that Edmund's brothers and sons should be excluded from the succession to the English throne.

In his administration of England, Canute thought only of reconciling the Danes and Anglo-Saxons and taking them both into his service. Conciliation was carried to the point of recognising the laws of King Edgar. Of great value to his position both in England and Denmark was his marriage to Ethelred's widow Emma. The union with England's former queen also acted as a guarantee against any unfriendly dis-



KING SWEYN CONQUERS ENGLAND, 1013
After a drawing by Matthaeus Paris (died 1259)

CANUTE CONQUERS NORWAY

positions on the part of Normandy. Though called to Denmark in 1018 to succeed his brother Harald on the Danish throne, Canute showed no desire on his return to England to favour his own countrymen. The man in whom he reposed the greatest confidence was Godwin, an Anglo-Saxon, whom he appointed jarl of Mercia.

Not content with the possession of England and Denmark, the King turned his thoughts to the conquest of Norway, the land of his forefathers. Oluf, the son of Harald Grenske, and called a Saint after his death, had antagonised many of the best men in Norway by the ruthlessness of his procedure in converting to Christianity hard-necked heathens. Having rejected Canute's opening request that Norway should pay him taxes, Olaf brought over to his side Anund Jakob, the King of Sweden, who was equally fearful of Canute's aims and ambitions. Profiting by Canute's absence in England, these two invaded Scania and Zealand with a large fleet. After a hasty return, Canute met the enemy fleet outside Helgeaa in Scania and would have failed to score a victory if Ulf Jarl, who had acted as Regent during his absence, had not come to his assistance. Not daring to return by sea, Oluf left his ships lying in the Swedish harbours and led his men back by land to the Norwegian frontier. After this event the situation in Denmark was so peaceful that Canute was able to go on a pilgrimage to Rome in the winter of 1027-8.

The success of Canute's expedition to Norway in 1028 was a foregone conclusion. The ground had been auspiciously prepared for a change of monarchy. Everywhere in Norway, from north to south, Canute was welcomed by the peasants who gave him hostages. After being proclaimed King of Norway without opposition, he gave the government of the country to his nephew Haakon Eriksön. But the conquest of Norway was not yet complete, for Oluf returned from his place of exile two years later to make a bid for the re-conquest of the country. At Stiklestad, near Trondhjemsfjord, he encountered an army double the strength of his own, was defeated and killed. After the death of Haakon Eriksön, the Viceroyalty was given to Sweyn, Canute's son by his first wife Alfifa. During Sweyn's minority, Alfifa ruled with such

ESTABLISHMENT OF CHRISTIANITY

severity that her son was supplanted by Magnus the Good, a son of the late Oluf. Thus the great Empire, which had only been held together by the strength and wisdom of Canute, began to disintegrate even in his lifetime.

The final rooting of Christianity in Denmark was the work of Canute and men like Odinkar, the missionary, who ended his years as bishop of Ribe. Adam of Bremen declares that Canute brought many English bishops to Denmark; among them Garbrand in Roskilde and Reginbert in Odense. By the year 1060 the Church had gained a powerful position in Denmark. The building of churches by English architects accounted for a similarity of design in the oldest churches of both countries. Such was the happy result of the sanguinary, piratical expeditions which at the beginning threatened to annihilate social order and ended by bringing civilisation even to the doors of the corsairs. Carried away by the spiritual emotions aroused in his visit to Rome, Canute addressed an open letter to his people which remains an abiding record of a humble and pious spirit.

I bring to your knowledge [he wrote] that I lately went to Rome to beg for the forgiveness of my sins and for the good of the people who are under my sovereignty. I had before made God the promise of this journey but could not for the sake of my Kingdom accomplish it before. You should know that at Easter time there was a great gathering at Rome and that Pope John and the Emperor Conrad and many Princes took kindly to me and honoured me with gifts of gold and silver. I talked with the Emperor, King Rudolf and other Princes of my country's needs and they all assured me peace, no barring of the ways and no unjust dues—I thank the Almighty God that I have brought my plan to a happy conclusion.

Canute the Great died at Shaftesbury on the 12th November 1035 and was buried in Winchester Cathedral. The title of "Great" was only earned with the passage of time. He was first known as Canute the Mighty for the many lands he ruled. It was almost without parallel that peace should have been preserved so long within England's frontiers, and Denmark too enjoyed peace during his reign. His death at the age of 40 ended prematurely the high ambitions and the restless spirit of a great reformer. With Canute dead and

END OF DANISH RULE OVER ENGLAND

buried, the great achievements of his reign seemed to the Danes no more than a dream of the past. They were now to enter an uncertain period during which they could neither add to their conquests or keep what they had.

While Canute was king, there was no real bond of union between England and Denmark, for one was completely independent of the other. Who should be the new King of England, Alfifa's son, Harald Harefoot, or Emma's son, Hardicanute? The northern English counties and London favoured Harald: the southern counties, led by Godwin, were defending the rights of Hardicanute. The final decision could not await the arrival from Denmark of Hardicanute, and Harald was therefore elected king. But this hot-tempered prince, who preferred hunting to church-going, was to die at Oxford in 1040. Now came Hardicanute, fresh from a peace settlement with King Magnus of Norway, to fill the empty throne. Successfully proclaimed king, he initiated his reign with unpopular taxes and with revengeful acts against the late Harald for the treatment of his mother and of his unlucky half-brother Alfred. Harald's body was exhumed from his grave in Westminster and thrown in the Thames: on being found by a fisherman it was buried in the churchyard of St. Clement the Dane. Hardicanute's days were spent in rioting and feasting until death by apoplexy overtook him after an inglorious reign of two years. His body was taken to Winchester and buried at the side of his father, Canute the Great. With him ended the Danish rule over England, for she now reverted to her old line of kings with the acceptance of Ethelred's son, Edward.

CHAPTER IV

AMONGST the many spiritless actions that are associated with the name of Hardicanute must be named the agreement with King Magnus of Norway, in which the two kings swore that whichever of the two lived longest would inherit the kingdom of the other. Magnus, on being apprised of Hardicanute's death, set sail for Denmark and claimed his right under this agreement to be king. The nation needed peace and the winning personality of Magnus helped to overcome the first resentment of the Danes to submit to a foreign prince. But there remained Sweyn Estridsen, a nephew of Canute, whose competitive claim to the throne of Denmark was a constant menace to Magnus in the succeeding years. To throw a veil over his pretensions he paid court to Magnus, who made him Governor of Denmark. Sweyn no sooner returned to his country than the affection of the people for the ancient dynasty resulted in his election as king at Viborg. He was, however, soon ejected by Magnus.

New storms were to gather when Harald, the uncle of Magnus, who is best known as Harald Hardrada, returned to Norway after amassing great riches in Russia and Asia Minor. He demanded that his nephew should cede him the half of Norway. On receiving a refusal, he made an alliance with Sweyn Estridsen. Persuaded by his counsellors that a compromise was preferable to the contingency of matching his strength against two redoubtable opponents, Magnus agreed to share with Harald the sovereignty over the Danish Isles, but not the kingdom. Once again Sweyn tried his fortune on the coast of Jutland and this time fought with so much bravery that Magnus declared: "If Sweyn had an army that resembled himself he would more often conquer than fly." Sweyn *did* fly, but Magnus's horse, in the course of the pursuit, took fright at a hare and threw him from his

STAMFORD BRIDGE

saddle. This accident was the cause of his death in 1047 at the age of 24. On Magnus Denmark and Norway could only pass one verdict: he was a good king. Sweyn succeeded him by natural right as Sweyn II, and Harald, much against his will, was constrained to return to Norway.

The Byzantine character Harald had developed during his years in the East set its mark on his relations with Sweyn. For a long succession of years the Danish coasts were a prey to acts of piracy instigated by Harald. Sweyn once succeeded with superior forces in surprising him near the Island of Leesö on his return from an expedition in which the town of Hedeby, now Schleswig, was sacked and burnt, but the Norwegian king escaped by throwing his Danish prisoners, bound to barrels, into the sea. In a great naval engagement at Nisaa, Halland, the Danes were severely routed and Sweyn's life was only saved by a Norwegian jarl, Haakon Ivarsson, who had previously been in his service. But most of Harald's expeditions were confined to plundering so that Sweyn's defensive position remained intact. At the end of seventeen years, both sides began to tire of operations which benefited neither of them. The two kings concluded a peace at Götaelven on the frontier and agreed to leave everything as it was. Two years later (1066) Harald was killed at Stamford Bridge in a foolhardy attempt to reconquer England, while Sweyn enjoyed eight more years in which to reorganise peace.

Sweyn's efforts to restore peace in the land brought him, however, into open conflict with the highest potentates of the Church. In his zeal to establish ecclesiastical order in Denmark, he chose to co-operate with the mighty Pope Gregory VII. Notwithstanding, the relations between Sweyn and Adalbert, the powerful Archbishop of Bremen, were strained to the utmost, because the Archbishop insisted on the King parting with his second wife, Gunnhild, the widow of Anund Jakob, on the plea of the illegitimacy of the marriage. The divorced Gunnhild was compelled to withdraw to a cloister in Sweden.

The number of churches existing in Sweyn's time show how much Christianity had conquered the Danish people. Scania alone could count 300 churches, which were mostly

ATTEMPT TO RECONQUER ENGLAND

built of wood. Sweyn collaborated with Adam of Bremen, a teacher in the cathedral school, in the writing of the *Bremen Episcopal Chronicle*, which was also a valuable contribution to the history of the north. His friendship with Bishop William of Roskilde, an Englishman, helped him to free the Danish church from the overlordship of Bremen. In an access of anger, we are told, Sweyn massacred outside the church of Roskilde persons who had offended his royal dignity. William barred him an entry to the church and pronounced excommunication, which had not happened before in Denmark. Returning to the church in coarse and repentant garments, Sweyn was pardoned by William, who withdrew the interdict. Thenceforward they lived on the happiest of terms. According to tradition, William's prayer that he might not survive Sweyn was answered; he died on the same day as Sweyn, 28th April 1074, and was buried at his side.

There passed three years after the conquest of England by William of Normandy before Denmark decided to try her fortunes with the Conqueror.¹ Sweyn's brother Asbjörn and his two sons led a Danish fleet into the Humber. The final result of this enterprise was that William laid the whole of Yorkshire in ruins whilst the Danish fleet lay inactive in the Humber outside the reach of William, who possessed no ships. Asbjörn was offered a covert bribe by William on the understanding that he sailed away in the winter months. But the fleet waited until the following summer in right anticipation of another bribe.

Sweyn Estridsen left fourteen sons, who were all born out of wedlock, and five of them mounted the throne, the one after the other. Custom ordained that the place chosen for electing a new king must be neutral ground, not easily accessible. Isöre near the Isefjord was chosen as the site where the people would choose between Harald and Canute as the new King. The two brothers were different in nature: Harald was gentle and pious: Canute had won fame when defending his country against the piratical Wends. No doubt fresh memories of Sweyn's peaceful and beneficial reign con-

¹ Sweyn counted on the support of the Danes in Northumbria who detested William.

A PIOUS KING

tributed to the election of Harald III, and his promises of new laws also weighed in his favour. Little is indeed known of Harald's legislative work. It is at least significant that an Englishman, Aelnoth, at the beginning of the next century, was able to declare that in his time the Danes expected of their kings that they should abide by the laws which Harald had established. Of the greatest benefit to civil freedom were the new forms of judicial procedure. Besides reviving the old prohibition against the settlement of disputes by single combat, he introduced the right of a defendant to refute an accusation by oath. One gains the general impression that Harald's laws protected the old laws from abuse and against any drastic innovations.

In resentment that he had been ousted from the throne by his brother Harald, Canute and two other of his brothers appealed to Norway for help. When the news reached the Pope, he warned Harald against countenancing any plans for the division of the kingdom after his death. It would lead to the destruction of the kingdom, the country would be torn in twain and the Church, as in other times, would be annihilated. In spiritual matters Harald followed closely in his father's steps. Not only was he on intimate terms with the Pope, but the Danish Church in these years was closely attached to the Papal See. Harald's short reign of six years was brought to a close in 1080. Though a weak and effeminate character, his achievements as a legislator have earned him a place in Danish history.

On Harald's death nothing could stand in the way of Canute's succession. Though he possessed many fine qualities, Canute II aroused many enmities by his rough treatment of all who crossed his path. Yet he was possessed of a high sense of justice, an extreme piety and an intense devotion to the Church. His morbid restlessness in the religious sphere led him to sacrifice his own interests to the advantage of the clergy. A king who fasted every Friday and allowed himself to be scourged by his own chaplains had not yet been seen in Denmark.

Canute II began his reign by taking dire action against his subjects in Scania and Halland because of their refusal

THE CHURCH SUPREME

to transport him and his retinue. He reduced them to obedience by refusing them pastoral rights in the vast oak forests and the right to fish in the Sound. Despite these forceful assertions of royal rights, Canute knew how to preserve peace and order throughout the land. The seas were freed from pirates and the country roads from robbers, and thieves were hung. Serfs were allowed to obtain full civil rights, if set at liberty by their lords and if they bought their freedom. Whilst collaborating with Archbishop Adalbert and secretly fighting him, Canute found a devoted associate in Pope Gregory VII with whom he was on the friendliest relations. After the King's death, Gregory wrote to his son : " Your father was so gifted, so loyal, so exceptional in his aims that scarcely any other King could find his like." Whether or not this reputation was fully deserved, his cultivation of the Pope's friendship was a wise political move. However much abused, clerical authority was then the only check on the rude morals of the time. The learned Danish King felt that the recognition of this fact gave the surest foundation for his rule. He patronised and befriended most those who were its greatest zealots.

Whilst Canute's zeal for establishing a new order made him many enemies, he continued unswervingly in his aims to establish a spiritual aristocracy which would exert as great an influence on the affairs of State as on religious matters. He was not alone content to build stone churches and to grant them large lands and rich incomes. The priestly order was raised by him to the first position in the land and in the Tings bishops were seated at the side of the Royal Family, the jarls and the first men of the land. In the time of Sweyn Estridsen, the power of the Church was built on the foundations laid by Canute the Great : but, under Canute II, theocracy reached the zenith of its power. Bishops could only be sentenced by the Pope ; those of a lower order could only be judged by the bishops. But the opposition of the people prevented Canute from imposing tithes of which a third would have gone to the bishops.

Like his predecessor Canute could not forget that his forefathers had once ruled over England. With the help of his

ASSASSINATION OF CANUTE II

brother-in-law Oluf Kyrre, King of Norway, and of Count Robert of Flanders, he assembled a large fleet in Limfjord. William set up defences where the Danes were most likely to land, but, being unable to count on the support of all his subjects, he hired troops from France, Germany and Italy. In the autumn of 1085 the whole of the Danish fleet lay in Limfjord waiting for a leader. Canute had been called to the southern frontier because the armies of the Emperor Henry IV were invading Saxony. The ships' crews were growing restless over the delay. When Canute finally appeared, many of the ships had left and the favourable opportunity had gone. Canute vented his anger on his brother Oluf, who had been left in command, by sending him to Flanders in chains.

From his later actions it is evident that this disappointment worked on Canute's mind. The harsh measures which he proceeded to adopt in the collection of tithes and in the fining of recalcitrants aroused the deepest indignation. At the same time the King drained the limited resources of the nation by touring the country with an enormous retinue. The north of Limfjord was soon the scene of an open rebellion which quickly spread to the whole of Jutland. Canute was pursued relentlessly until he reached the frontier of Schleswig. The Queen and his son Karl were despatched hastily to Robert of Flanders, while the King fled to his estate in Odense.

On the evening of the 10th July 1086 Canute was kneeling before the altar of St. Albans Church when the rebels, thirsting for his life, tried to force their way in. Failing in this they threw stones through the windows, one of which hit the King on the eyebrow, so that blood poured forth. Canute continued his prayers unmoved until an inthorned lance pierced his side and mortally wounded him. Of his two brothers, who defended him with the greatest bravery, Benedict was killed, and Eric made good his escape by forcing his way out of the church.

This is the first occasion that a Danish king fell victim to a popular rebellion. Canute's end was tragic but not altogether unmerited. The loftiness of his aims was unpalatable to his generation. He whose Christian heart had leaned

ERIC EJEGOD

towards the poorer classes had estranged many of his subjects by his reckless fight for a powerful Church. A long time passed before the nation could bring itself to regard him as a saint. The new King Oluf I, whom Count Robert of Flanders would not return to Denmark until his brother Nils was offered as hostage in his stead, ruled for nine years which were chiefly notable for the great famine that spread over the land. The clergy did not fail to represent this calamity as a divine punishment for the murder of Canute. Oluf died in 1095 without leaving children.

Of all King Sweyn's sons, Eric Ejegod was the one the Danes loved most as king. He seems to have inherited all the good without the bad qualities of his late brother Canute. He was the man of the people, every man's friend and the last man to take a decision without their consent. At the meetings of the Tings he acquired a natural ascendancy by his gift of speech and a clear and piercing voice. In his relations with the northern countries good fortune befriended him from the beginning of his reign. Between Norway and Denmark there had long been peace and the only disturbing factor was the constant struggle between the kings of Norway and Sweden for the possession of Dalsland; but through the mediation of Eric the two parties were easily reconciled. As a strong ruler Eric Ejegod resisted all attacks on the land and greatly distinguished himself in naval fights against the plundering Wends. He must have possessed an attractive personality for no king in these times excited greater admiration and sympathy.

The northerner's craze for wandering moved deeply in Eric's blood and in 1098 he started on a pilgrimage to Italy, often on his bare feet. He had two objects in mind: to win for his dead brother the glory of a saint and to obtain the papal consent to the establishment of a separate Archbishopric for Denmark so as to free the kingdom from the metropolitan jurisdiction of Bremen. Urban II, who was then at Bari in South Italy, was well inclined to gratify the wishes of Eric. Soon after Eric's return to Denmark the remains of Canute were placed in the fine church of St. Canute at Odense. Under a new Pope, Paschalis II, he was acknowledged as a

KING NILS

saint and accepted into the hosts of martyrs under the name of Canutus. The other purpose of Eric's journey, the appointment of a separate Archbishopric for Denmark, was not fulfilled in his reign. Later, in a fit of deep penitence at having slain four of his courtiers in a drunken fray, Eric decided to go on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to expiate the crime. In vain his people tried to dissuade him and even offered him a third of their goods if he would renounce his intention. But Eric was obdurate. He died in the island of Cyprus without having seen the Holy Land. His queen, Bodil, continued the journey and died on the Mount of Olives.

A year passed before the news of Eric's death reached Denmark. Of his direct successors his two younger sons, Canute and Eric Emune, were still minors and the eldest son, Harald Kesja, had earned discredit for his bad government during Eric's absence abroad. The sons were therefore passed over and Eric's brother Nils was elected king. He was the last of Sweyn's sons to ascend the Danish throne and was by far the weakest character. Yet his moderation and subservience to the will of the people strengthened the power of royalty. The nation followed him blindly when he laid claim to the royal rights and estates which had been formerly conferred on the kings of Jutland. For the Church he had little sympathy or understanding and the strong agitation against the marriage of priests and the introduction of tithes left him indifferent. He had fortunately at his side a wise wife and counsellor in Margaret, the widow of King Magnus Barfod of Norway who had been killed during a campaign in Ireland. The whole country looked on her as their ruler and the King himself was forced to acknowledge it in his public and private life. By her second marriage Margaret begot two sons, Inge and Magnus; the first was accidentally killed in early youth and the second grew up to be a strong, handsome and well-gifted youth.

The establishment of a separate Archbishopric, so long deferred, became a reality in this reign. A Papal Legate was commissioned to select a proper site for the residence of the new Archbishop and to select the most suitable incumbent.

CANUTE LAVARD

The town of Lund was chosen and Bishop Asser, a nephew of King Eric, was made the first Archbishop. Asser's character and gifts were not equal to the high estate in which he was born. Neither as Prince of the Church or as the King's adviser did he make any mark.

It was due to Margaret that so able a person as Canute Lavard, the son of Eric Ejegod, was at the age of 19 appointed Jarl and army leader in the most vulnerable part of Denmark, South Jutland. With unbounded energy he exterminated the bands of pirates that haunted the frontier lands between the Sli and Eider. He also destroyed with his arms the piratical Wends in Holstein and Mecklenburg. Henry, the ruler of the Obotrites, was overthrown at Rendsborg and only saved himself by swimming on his horse over the Eider. The trials of war eventually induced Henry to sue for peace, which was bought for the surrender of his mother's estates in Denmark. When he died, Canute secured all his lands as a fief from the German King Lothar. In Schleswig he kept a magnificent Court in German style and in this respect eclipsed the Royal Family. He was married to Ingeborg, a niece of Margaret Fredkulla, whose father was the Russian Prince Mstislav of Novgorod. As friend of the priests he built many churches in South Jutland.

Canute's sudden rise to fame provoked suspicion and jealousy in the Royal Court. The King's son, Magnus had then reached manhood and he was only awaiting his time to draw swords with the pretentious Jarl. Margaret's efforts to prevent a collision between these tempestuous princes were successful until her death in 1127. Canute did not ease the tension by his many acts of disrespect towards the elderly king. The man who added most fuel to the fire was Sweyn's son, Henry Skadelaar. The intervention of the King for a time held back the flames. Then an event in Skadelaar's household turned the scales against Canute. Skadelaar had married Ingrid, a niece of Margaret, but she found her husband so distasteful that she fled from his presence to the arms of a lover. Hotly pursued by Skadelaar, she was caught at Aalborg and returned to her home. Rightly or wrongly the blame for this scandalous affair was placed at Canute's door.

MURDER OF CANUTE LAVARD

Treachery was at last to bring Canute into the clutches of his enemies, Nils, Skadelaar and Magnus. He was invited by Magnus to spend Christmas at Roskilde in the company of the foremost men of the day. Magnus made pretence that he was about to leave on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and that he wished Canute to act as the family guardian during his absence. Heedless of his wife's warning, the King accepted the invitation. After a most amicable reception by his host, he was enticed away to a country place near Haraldsted, where lived Eric, the jarl of Falster. Eric's wife, Cecilia, a daughter of Canute the Saint, pleaded with him not to go unarmed and without a strong following. On coming to the appointed place, Canute noticed that Magnus was armed. Magnus suddenly threw off his mask with the words: "Canute, to whom does Denmark belong?" "God grant your Father many more years," was the reply. "No," cried Magnus, "everything comes to you; you take the land and his people from us." Before Canute had time to escape, he was thrown to the ground and his head cloven with a sword.

Canute Lavard died an innocent man. In no act or sign had he shown that he aimed at Denmark's throne. Eight days after his death, his wife Ingeborg gave birth to her first son. To allay any suspicion that she had brought forth an aspirant to the throne, she gave him the name of Valdemar, after his grandfather, the Grand Duke Vladimir.

This shameless assassination awoke a storm of indignation throughout the country and drew Canute's two brothers Harald Kesja and Eric Emune together in a common plot to avenge the act. In the assembly at Ringsted, in which town Canute lay buried, anger turned against the King who was suspected of being privy to the crime. Their fury was only appeased when, at the Archbishop Asser's suggestion, it was decided to banish Magnus from Denmark in perpetuity. Magnus, however, succeeded in rejoining his father, which was the prelude to a sanguinary civil war. For a time, the royal party had its own way. Eric Emune was banished to Norway, and Harald Kesja had the effrontery to go over to his brother's assassins in order to obtain the duchy of Zealand. Eric soon returned from exile, and, on the second day of

SHORT REIGN OF ERIC EMUNE

Pentecost, 1134, defeated Nils in the hard-fought battle of Fodevig, Scania, in which Magnus and Skadelaar paid with their lives for the murder of Canute Lavard. Harald, who had fought against his brother, immediately took to flight. To his own undoing, Nils returned to Schleswig, the very place where Canute's partisans resided. He had no sooner arrived in the town than he and a number of his suite were massacred.

The new King Eric Emune, who resembled little his father, did not rest until he had exterminated the vanquished party. Harald, who disputed the throne, and his eight sons were put to death. These barbarous acts accomplished, Eric led an expedition against the Wends, who, after Canute Lavard's death, had returned to their ancient practices. For the first time in Danish history cavalry were transported by sea. Arcona, in the island of Rügen, was captured and its inhabitants baptised by force, a conversion which lapsed when the Danish fleet disappeared without achieving anything of importance. Equally immaterial was his excursion to Norway to restore to the throne the exiled King Magnus. A stubborn opposition forced him to return to Denmark, with the sole satisfaction of having burnt the city of Oslo. His senseless treatment of men in high places brought him in conflict with Eskild, whose election as Asser's successor to the Archbishopric of Lund he refused to recognise, preferring his own candidate, Bishop Rig of Schleswig. Political sense and human understanding were not part of Eric's moral equipment and it was these failings that led to his death. The end came suddenly. When residing in Ribe he was asked by some peasants to act as arbitrator in a dispute; but he desired to have the matter settled in the Ting, where he could be present with all his suite. A landed proprietor of the neighbourhood named Plog, who was refused the right to defend himself against a peasant's accusation, sprang forward and ran the King through with his spear. Plog left the Ting unhurt and lived for a long time as a highly respected man in Jutland.

After Eric's death, no less than four royal descendants could consider themselves as equally entitled to the throne: Sweyn, a natural son of Eric Emune, Canute, a son of Magnus,

CIVIL WAR

Valdemar, the son of Canute Lavard, and Eric Lam, a grandson of Eric Ejegod. As the majority of these candidates were under 10 years of age, the choice of the electors fell on Eric Lam, a weak and supine monarch, who could do nothing good during his nine years' reign. Oluf, the son of Harald Kesja, raised a rebellion in Scania and caused much annoyance to the kingdom until he was killed in 1142. Under Eric's weak rule the Wends plundered the country more than ever before. A feeble expedition led against them only aroused derision. An enemy ship pursued the King as he was crossing the Great Belt and, though captured, he succeeded in escaping in a boat. Bodily ill and tired of ruling, King Eric decided to enter St. Canute's cloister in Odense where he died almost immediately.

Sweyn III, Eric Emune's son, Canute and young Valdemar became now the figureheads in a long period of civil war. Scania and Zealand elected Sweyn and North Jutland elected Canute. Valdemar, as a challenge to Canute, the son of his father's murderer, allied himself with Sweyn and was made Duke of South Jutland. Fortified by this alliance, Sweyn seized the person of the Archbishop, who had supported Canute, but was quickly to repent of this sacrilegious behaviour towards the head of the Church. The great prelate was given the domain of Aarhus, a whole province in Scania and three-quarters of the island of Bornholm. Canute could not expect to hold his ground for long against both Valdemar and Sweyn. After sustaining many reverses he fled from the country and enlisted the support of the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa. But not even the help of German troops enabled him to recover North Jutland. At the battle of Gedbaek, in which young Valdemar distinguished himself the most, he was completely routed.

While Sweyn appeared to have the upper hand, his position was threatened by forces outside Denmark. Barbarossa, obsessed with the idea that his empire should embrace all other principalities, invited Sweyn to come to Merseburg with the avowed object of establishing order in Denmark. On arrival, Sweyn was offered Denmark as a German fief and, being in the Emperor's hands, thought it wise to comply.

BATTLE OF GRADEHEDE

No sooner had he turned his back on Germany than he broke his promises. Through Valdemar's mediation, a reconciliation was effected between Sweyn and Canute who was satisfied with the grant of large territories in Scania, Zealand and Jutland.

But the popularity of Sweyn was beginning to wane. An unnecessary expedition to Sweden in the winter of 1153-4 had brought him discredit and popular feeling was disgusted with his preferences for German morals and customs, which were encouraged by his German wife Adele, a daughter of the Margrave Konrad of Meissen. Valdemar too, growing restless at the boundless ambitions of Sweyn, drew nearer to Canute. A reconciliation was effected by the betrothal of Valdemar to Canute's thirteen-year-old sister, Sofie. The engagement was threatening enough to Sweyn, but it caused him less anxiety than his increasing unpopularity. In a fit of despair he turned his back on Denmark. At the end of three years' residence in Germany, however, he landed in Fünen with a select body of troops placed at his disposal by the Duke of Saxony.

In the face of this Canute and Valdemar found it expedient to negotiate. All three princes met in Lolland in 1157. With Bishop Elias of Ribe as mediator, it was decided to divide the kingdom into three parts. Valdemar took Jutland, Sweyn the Scanian provinces and Bornholm, and to Canute III were awarded Zealand, Fünen and the remaining islands. Each one took the name of King. But the pact only lasted three days. Whilst the agreement was being celebrated at Roskilde at a great banquet, Sweyn signalled to his guards to fall on his two rivals. Valdemar extinguished the lights and sword in hand opened a passage through the guards and escaped, but Canute was assassinated. Having collected a large force, Valdemar marched against Sweyn and defeated him decisively at Gradehede, near Viborg. Sweyn, while seeking safety in flight, was attacked and killed by a peasant. Of the three kings, Valdemar alone survived, and the country was relieved of a personality which it could well afford to lose.

CHAPTER V

ONE mile east of Sorö is the place where Absalon was born. His father was Asser Rig, the fourth and youngest son of Skjalm Hvide, who had been foster-brother to Canute Lavard. On Asser's country estate Valdemar lived his young years and formed a friendship with Absalon which lasted a lifetime. To equip himself fully for the vocation of a priest, Absalon had studied in a theological school in Paris. From the moment of his return to Denmark, he was invariably at Valdemar's side in the critical years that followed. It was fortunate for Absalon that he early acquired a position that gave him the right and the opportunity to take a leading part in public life. Through Valdemar's influence, Absalon was in 1157 unanimously elected Bishop of Roskilde, though only 30 years of age. The citizens of the town, after the ups and downs of recent years, felt the need of a man whose one aim was to secure peace for the land. Events were to show that his services to learning and legislation earned him less fame than his military achievements. It was he who, although a bishop, took the lead in the great undertakings that eventually freed the land from the plague of the Wends, the determined enemies of Christianity.

On Palm Sunday, 1158, Absalon had his first brush with the Wends. At Boeslunde he succeeded in splitting their ranks and putting them to flight. Here Absalon learnt the lesson that suddenness of attack, not numbers, was the best way to conquer them. But it needed many expeditions to conquer so vast an area. So long as Henry the Lion held sway in North Germany, a Danish offensive beyond Rügen was out of the question and Henry was apt to view with a jealous eye any incursions by other princes. Valdemar therefore thought it the wisest policy to flatter the pride of the ambitious Barbarossa, who was Henry's secret enemy. Where

ATTACKS ON THE WENDS

Valdemar differed from Absalon was in his reluctance to spill Danish blood before the nation had recovered from the wreckage of the past years. He also disregarded Absalon's advice in accepting an invitation from Barbarossa to Dole, in Burgundy, at the moment that the dispute about the Papal election was at its height. Valdemar desired the Emperor's friendship and his youthful soul was thirsting after an acquaintance with foreign lands. The Emperor had purposely chosen a meeting-place close to the French frontier in the hope of attracting thither King Louis VII of France and the Pope Alexander III, but neither of them chose to cross the frontier. Though the meeting was without consequence, Valdemar at least achieved his purpose of winning the goodwill of the Emperor.

From the moment of his return to Denmark, Valdemar began a series of expeditions which ended in the complete subjugation of the Wendish tribes. The most important of these expeditions took place in 1169 and led to the conquest of Arcona and the island of Rügen. Arcona, which was the principal sanctuary of the Wends, contained a large temple in which stood the great statue of the Svantevit, the god of war and victory. When the temple and its statue had been destroyed, all the inhabitants of the country were evangelised; the site of the temple was surrendered for the building of a Christian church and all Christian prisoners were delivered into Danish hands without ransom. Under a Papal Bull of the 4th November 1169 the whole island was placed under the bishopric of Roskilde. The infuriated Henry the Lion demanded a half of the tribute and treasures of Arcona and egged the Wends on to further plunderings of the Danish coasts. Two years' fighting had convinced Valdemar that Denmark was not yet strong enough to pit her forces against Germany with any chance of success and he yielded to Henry's demands. Only when the latter, ten years later, was overthrown by the German Emperor, had Denmark grown so strong that no German Power could hold her in check. Although it was Valdemar's son who was to reap the full harvest, Absalon and his brother Esbern never relaxed their attacks on the Wends. In the year 1176 the city of Stettin

CANONISATION OF CANUTE LAVARD

surrendered and the Danish flag was hoisted everywhere near the mouth of the Oder.

The onerous duties of consolidating his position in Denmark and of fighting the Wends were enough to dissuade Valdemar from interfering in other foreign countries. His first concern must be to settle in his lifetime the question of royal succession. With so many princely candidates to the throne who had as good a title as members of the ruling house, Valdemar decided to present a *fait accompli* by obtaining the recognition of his eldest son while yet a boy. Fortunately Prince Buris, the son of Skadelaar, who was plotting to remove Valdemar from the throne, fell before his plans could materialise. On the 25th June 1170 the seven-year-old Canute was crowned and anointed by Archbishop Eskild. On the same day was celebrated the canonisation of Canute Lavard. In the words of the Papal Bull he had lived a praiseworthy life and after his death a spring had gushed forth near his grave, a blind man had recovered his sight, not to speak of other miracles.

Though Buris was dead, the King's life was before long in danger from other persons. Magnus, a natural son of Eric Lam, and Karl and Canute, the grandsons of Archbishop Eskild, were the leading conspirators; the plot was discovered and the conspirators imprisoned. The old Archbishop Eskild, who was at the time absent in France, decided on his return to exchange an agitated life for repose in a cloister. He resigned his episcopalian offices and, with the consent of the sovereign pontiff, nominated Absalon his successor. It needed all the prayers of the King, the nation and the clergy to make him accept this high office.

It was from the territory of Scania that ill winds began to blow at the end of Valdemar's reign. Absalon was only following the example of the Church in Europe in exacting tithes and insisting on the celibacy of the clergy, but these measures were highly displeasing to the Scanians. They also resented the appointment of Absalon's nominees, many of his own family, to high offices. In vain the dauntless Absalon endeavoured to appease the malcontents: he was forced to take flight; the peasants, regarding him as their worst enemy,

CANUTE IV

burnt his home and traversed the country committing every form of violence against the royal functionaries. Emissaries arrived in Zealand to offer the suppression of the rebellion if the tithes were abolished and the friends or relations of Absalon were dismissed from their administrative posts. The King returned a menacing reply and, accompanied by Absalon, repaired to Scania and was, for his own part, received with the greatest respect. But Valdemar was again unable to quell the apostolic ardour of Absalon who proceeded to excommunicate the rebels. On passing a second time into Scania, Valdemar inflicted a decisive defeat on the rebellious peasants at Dysiebro ; but the tithes were withdrawn. It remained to the next king to stifle the last embers of resistance.

Valdemar the Great died in 1182 after a reign of twenty-five years. On assuming royal powers he had found the country in a state of disunion and disorder. By the end of his reign he had brought to it unity and peace. A great measure of his success was due to his wisdom in surrounding himself with the best advisers whom he never failed. To Absalon the loss of Valdemar came as the bitterest blow for it meant to him the severance of a deep and lifelong friendship.

For the first time in Danish history, a king came to the throne already crowned, but, as a strict observer of ancient customs, Canute IV first received the homage of all the Provincial Assemblies before entering on his royal duties. In Jutland his reception was the warmest. In Scania Valdemar's death was the signal for the former insurrectionists to avenge their dead. They had found a new leader in Prince Harald, probably a grandson of Harald Kesja. The authorities in Scania were equal to the occasion and practically without bloodshed dispersed the peasants at Lommeaa, near Lund.

It was well that peace had come so quickly in the train of the new King, for the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa showed no signs of abandoning his aims to acquire full sovereignty over Denmark. When he was politely reminded that Canute IV in no way recognised the sovereign claims of Germany, he, with less civility, sent back to Denmark the sister of Canute, who was engaged to his son, and incited Bogislaus, the Duke of Pomerania, to declare war on Denmark. It was the direct

DEFEAT OF BOGISLAUS OF POMERANIA

reply to Absalon's words to the German Ambassador: "Do you believe that the Emperor can at his pleasure take Denmark as easily as he can take Thüringen? Go home and tell your Emperor that the Danish King does not intend to show him obedience or to pay him homage."

The Emperor was in reality too much occupied with events in Germany and Italy to dream of sending an army to Denmark. Collecting hurriedly troops and ships, Absalon left for Rügen, where Bogislaus had arrived with 500 ships. On drawing near to the island, Bogislaus mistook Absalon's men for his own Obotrite allies. Great was his surprise and dismay when the Danes began to hoist Absalon's triumphal flag. In terror he fled. Of Bogislaus's 500 ships, only 35 escaped; the rest were sunk or captured. Yet another Danish fleet set forth the same year, this time under the command of Canute and Absalon. The Wends now concealed themselves in the towns whilst the Danes were terrorising the surroundings. When the King was besieging Kamin, where Bogislaus resided, the gates were suddenly thrown open. All the clergy in the town came forward barefooted and prayed on their knees that the King would spare the city and give the Duke a safe conduct. The next day Bogislaus presented himself to the King and placed himself and the whole of his lands under the King's sovereignty. By the time that the expedition had done its work, Danish rule extended to East and West Pomerania and to large parts of Mecklenburg. Rightly from that moment could King Canute, as his successors, call himself King of the Wends (*Rex Sclavorum*). Absalon then laid down his sword and devoted the rest of his days to his religious calling.

Canute being childless, the Danes began to focus their attention on young Valdemar. He fortunately combined in his person all the best attributes of a ruler of the time: he was skilful in war as in peace. Already in his eighteenth year he was given the governorship of South Jutland, which in the last years had been administered by the self-seeking Bishop Valdemar of Schleswig. The bishop was the natural son of Canute Magnussön and was born the same year as his father was murdered in Roskilde. Feeling that the new-comer

ADOLPH OF HOLSTEIN REBELS

was depriving him of his natural pottage, he began to intrigue against him with the help of the Norwegian and Swedish kings and a number of German princes, notably Count Adolph III of Holstein. Having obtained ships from the King of Norway, he returned to Schleswig and without demur assumed the title of King of Denmark. But he had sadly overplayed his part and fell an easy prey to Duke Valdemar, who seized him unawares and sent him in chains to the prison tower of Söborg in North Zealand. The Pope attempted in vain to secure his release.

During the next eight years Adolph of Holstein, who had been driven out of South Jutland, kept in a constant state of terror the Danish possessions in North Germany. When he was finally deserted by his German allies in 1200, he was forced to capitulate and to surrender the strong fortress of Rendsborg which he had recently built on the Eider, and which controlled the approaches to Holstein. Having made enemies of many of his followers in Holstein, he suffered a second humiliation in the battle of Stellau, near Kellinghusen. Hamburg opened its gates to the victors and Lübeck and Schwerin paid homage to them. The end of the year marked the end of Adolph's adventures. Though Hamburg again went over to him, it surrendered finally to the returning army of Valdemar. Adolph was then sent to join his friend Bishop Valdemar at Söborg prison. Two years later he was released on an undertaking that he surrendered all his previous possessions north of the Elbe. The remainder of his years were spent in extreme quietude in his small county of Schauenburg.

Canute IV died in 1202 in the midst of his conquests. His last years were irradiated with the highest lustre. It was reflected in the eagerness with which foreign powers, the former enemies of Denmark, sought matrimonial alliances with the Danish Royal House. His eldest sister was married to Count Sigfried von Orlamünde, whose son Albert won fame as Governor of Holstein. Another sister, Helen, was married in 1202 to William of Lüneburg. From their son Otto of Lüneburg descends the Brunswick-Lüneburg House and from its junior line the Royal House which now sits on England's throne.

ABSALON AND THE CHURCH

Absalon died one and a half years before Canute IV. Hitherto the narrative has only covered the military side to his character, the warrior who shared his victories with two successive kings. He possessed not only military talents of the highest order, but all the makings of a statesman. As patron of the learned arts, he persuaded Svend Aagesøn and Saxo to write their memorable histories of ancient Denmark and the first phase of the Middle Ages. Like all other great prelates of the time, Absalon aimed at preserving the pre-eminence and rights of the Church. Eskild and Absalon were responsible for the introduction of the first ecclesiastical laws in Denmark, of which the law for Scania was the first. Absalon followed with an ecclesiastical law for Zealand which, as the other law, was confirmed by Valdemar I. They were almost identical and were generally founded on the same principles as inspired the Canon Law then in force throughout Europe. The temporal power of the bishops was not only sustained by the armed forces which they maintained but by the strong citadels of which Eskild possessed many in Zealand and Scania. Copenhagen owes its origin to the fortified castle built near the port by Absalon. The clergy shared the warlike habits of the time : at the battle of Fodevig there fell five bishops and sixty other priests. Through the liberality of kings and private persons, and through the tithes, the bishops amassed huge fortunes and estates, but they were in turn lavish in their gifts to churches and cloisters.

Under the Canon Law the people and the lower clergy had properly the right to elect the higher ranks of the Church, but this right was very soon taken over exclusively by the Chapters. When, however, endowments placed the Church in possession of great lands and bishops became thus the feudatories of princes, it became ever more important for the secular heads of the Kingdom that the elected bishops should be their true and devoted servants. It was therefore natural that princes began to encroach on the rights of the Chapters, with the result that no bishop could be elected without their approval. At the end of the eleventh and at the beginning of the twelfth century, a violent dispute took place between Pope Gregory VII and his successors on the one side and

MONASTICISM

the Emperors Henry IV and Henry V on the other, both sides claiming the right of investing bishops with the "crozier and the ring." The struggle was ended in 1122 by the Concordat of Worms in virtue of which the Emperor renounced this right, but the bishop, after being elected by the Chapter, received a sceptre from the Emperor as a symbol of his feudal duties towards the temporal sovereign. Though the Concordat overruled the previous procedure whereby bishops were appointed by kings, the Danish kings never renounced their claim to exercise an influence on the choice of the bishops.

Monasticism, which had already obtained a foothold in Denmark during the reign of Canute the Great with the arrival of English monks, chiefly Benedictines, the twelfth and thirteenth centuries saw firmly established under the three beneficent kings, the two Valdemars and Canute IV. With Eskild as Archbishop, there was a great influx of French monks under the inspiration of St. Bernard, the celebrated Abbé of the Monastery of Clairvaux. Of all the monasteries founded in these reigns, none could surpass in richness and fame the monastery of Sorö, which was established by the father of Absalon. The monks contributed much to the earliest civilisation of Denmark, and particularly those who came from France and England, countries that had reached a far higher stage of culture than Denmark. In addition to spiritual work, they helped to develop agriculture, as in the reclaiming of desert lands; in architecture the English monks were the more proficient. As monks and canons alone cultivated the sciences, the cathedral schools and the monasteries were the only institutions where even the most elementary instruction could be given. But riches ruined discipline and morality: idleness, high living and ignorance gradually took the place of frugality and learning. Bishops never inspected monasteries many of which became the centres of shameless disorder. The greatest offenders were the mendicant friars who roamed the country in large groups and enjoyed a monopoly in preaching and receiving confessions.

Valdemar II was unanimously accepted as king and was crowned on Christmas Day, 1202. He was unmarried, but

VALDEMAR, ARCHBISHOP OF BREMEN

had two natural sons : Nils, the future Count of Halland, and Canute, later Duke of Esthonia. The time had gone by when natural birth was no obstacle to the throne, and popular voices now demanded that Valdemar should get himself a wife. History does not give the reason why Dagmar, the daughter of Ottokar I of Bohemia, was the chosen bride. The marriage only lasted seven years, for she died in 1212.

As a marriage gift, the King granted Dagmar's wish that Bishop Valdemar should be released from his prison ; but he was made to swear that he would never again draw near the Danish frontier nor intrigue against the Royal House.



Map of territory conquered by Valdemar the Victorious
(The lands belonging to Rugen on the continent are shaded.)

Since Danish territory now extended to the Elbe and a part of it stood outside the jurisdiction of the archbishopric, plans were set on foot to transfer the see to Hamburg. The plan might have taken effect but for the death of Archbishop Hartvig of Bremen in 1207 and the election in his place, through Papal influence, of Archbishop Valdemar. The election was condemnable on two counts : Valdemar had broken his oath and was further invalid because the chapter of Hamburg had taken no part in the election. Armed to the teeth, this reprobate prelate gathered round him all the German princes who had a grudge against Denmark.

Valdemar II had reason in these years to view with disquietude the turn of events in Germany. While the two

CONQUEST OF ESTHONIA

kings, Otto, son of Henry the Lion, and Philip of Swabia, were both contending for power, Denmark had little to fear. The situation took on another aspect when Philip was murdered in 1208 and Otto, with the approval of the German princes, entered into sole possession of the German throne. A year later Otto fell foul of the Pope and was excommunicated. The young Frederick II then stepped forward as a candidate for his father's throne. Though poor, practically unknown and with scarcely a friend in Germany, he had the support of the great Pope Innocent III. Otto having been beaten at Bouvines by Philip Augustus, King of France, Frederick was crowned Emperor at Aix-la-Chapelle. Valdemar declared himself for Frederick, who in return confirmed him in the possession of all the lands that his predecessors had conquered in Germany, though the eastern frontiers were not mentioned. This important document was signed by Innocent III shortly before his death and by his successor Honorius III. A last fight on the Elbe secured Denmark in her possessions for a long time to come. In 1215 Otto crossed the Elbe with a large army and entered Hamburg. By cutting off the city's supplies, Valdemar's army forced a surrender after a very long siege. Also the domination of Archbishop Valdemar was nearing an end. At the command of the Pope he was expelled from Bremen and, though an excommunicated person, withdrew to a Cistercian cloister in Hanover.

Now that his position in North Germany was secure, Valdemar was free to operate in the Baltic lands that lay between Pomerania and Russia. The expeditions to these lands were primarily in the nature of a Crusade and were designed to uproot heathenism. Innocent III was dead, but his successor did not hesitate to authorise the subjection to Danish rule of all heathen lands that could be conquered. In the beginning of 1219 Valdemar, with an enormous fleet manned by Danes, Germans and Slavs, and with an assembly of bishops and priests, left for the Baltic. The readiness of the heathenish populations to submit without the smallest opposition enabled the Danes to land peacefully in Esthonia and to build the fortress of Reval, whilst the priests went baptising in the surroundings. All went peacefully until the

IMPRISONMENT OF VALDEMAR

Danes were one day surprised at supper-time by the inrush of a large band of Esthonians. After killing Bishop Teoderick, whom they mistook for the King, they spread everywhere terror and confusion. The assailants were held at bay by the courageous Prince Vitslav until the Danes had time to assemble their forces and to drive back the intruders.

According to old legends, the victory was gained by celestial favour, because the Danebrog, the Danish standard, descended from heaven in the middle of the battle and reanimated the waning courage of the Danes. The tradition is probably derived from the fact that the Pope presented the expedition with a sacred standard, red with a white cross in the middle, which was used as the principal flag of the Danes in all their wars until it was lost in the fatal expedition to the Ditmarschen in 1500. The campaign continued until the end of the year when all who could be found had been christianised. Meantime the Esthonians were attacked by the German Knights, who resented that all the spoils should fall to the Danes. Valdemar considered himself justified in taking drastic measures and he closed the harbour of Lübeck to these southern invaders.

Valdemar was now at the apogee of his power. Denmark had never been so powerful since the time of Canute the Great. Holstein, Lauenburg, Rügen, Mecklenburg, Pomerania, Esthonia and parts of Prussia had recognised him as their ruler. In this hour of exaltation, a chance mishap brought down in an instant the great edifice erected by himself and his royal predecessors. In the autumn of 1223 he was out hunting in the small islands that cluster round the southern coast of Fünen. With him was his young son Valdemar and a small following. Suddenly there appeared the figure of one of his lieges, Henry of Schwerin, who had lately returned from Egypt only to find half of his land in the hands of the Danes. The Count deftly concealed his plans till the end of an evening's carousal, when the King and his followers were wellnigh intoxicated. In the morning hours Henry and his men entered the King's tent and arrested him and his son. They were taken in chains across the Elbe and confined in the strong fortress of Dannenberg, with whose owner Henry was on friendly terms.

Great was the confusion that overtook Denmark on losing

RELEASE OF VALDEMAR

in one night her king and her heir-apparent: there was no one to take over the reins of government, for his other sons were both too young. His loyal supporter, the old Archbishop Anders, afflicted with leprosy, had resigned his office and was living a lonely life on a small island in the south-east part of Scania. The only person to take an active interest in the King's plight was Pope Honorius III. He denounced Henry as a traitor to his liege lord and benefactor, who had been a faithful servant of the Church. If he did not release his prisoners within a month, he would be excommunicated. The threat left Henry cold, for he knew that the Emperor Frederick would rejoice inwardly over Denmark's misfortune. But neither Henry nor the Emperor judged it expedient to let the matter drag on indefinitely. Valdemar, however, refused to be released on condition that he went on a crusade within two years, returned to Germany all lands beyond the Elbe except Pomerania and Rügen, and accepted Denmark as a fief from the Emperor, while Count Albert of Orlamünde should keep Holstein as a fief from the German kingdom.

All Denmark's enemies now rose in one body to put these ignominious terms into execution. Archbishop Valdemar, then 70 years of age, had already invaded Holstein. Count Albert succeeded in driving him back, but could not prevent Count Adolph IV, a son of the former Adolph, from breaking into Holstein and re-taking most of his father's lands. At the beginning of 1225, Albert had mustered sufficient forces to attack the enemy at Mölln. After an all-day fight, Albert was taken prisoner and was imprisoned in Schwerin Castle. Lübeck and Hamburg were the next to free themselves. With the capture of Albert faded the last hope of freeing Valdemar by force. The apparent paralysis that had gripped Denmark encouraged Henry to wring yet more drastic concessions from Valdemar. He now demanded a ransom payment of 45,000 marks silver and the surrender to Germany of all lands south of the Eider. Within ten days of his release Rendsborg should be handed over to Count Adolph and the King's sons were to be held as hostages. King Valdemar saw his kingdom again on Christmas Day, 1225, but a kingdom in complete disorder.

TERRITORIAL LOSSES

The Pope alone could, and did, release Valdemar from his pledges "because an oath (*eden*) must not be a bond in the service of injustice but a support for justice." In 1226 Valdemar opened war. In conjunction with Otto of Lüneburg he advanced on Rendsborg. His former luck seemed to be returning to him. He subdued with ease the Ditmarschen and occupied the district of Itzehoe. It was, however, impossible for Denmark in her battered condition to cope with the rising number of her adversaries which could count Lübeck, Hamburg, Saxony, Schwerin and Bremen. On the 22nd July 1227, the opposing armies faced one another at Bornhöved in Holstein ready for a contest that was to decide the fate of the North German States. At the decisive moment, when the enemy was unable any longer to withstand the Danish onslaught, the army of the Ditmarschen attacked the rear of the Danish army, and all was over. The King lost one eye and barely escaped a second imprisonment.

Denmark was now back to the Eider as her southern frontier. Of her former conquests there remained only Rendsborg, Rügen, and part of Pomerania and Esthonia.¹ Henceforth Valdemar cared for nothing but the preservation of peace and the promotion of the welfare of his people. A tragedy in his family and dark presentiments of the future overshadowed his last years. Dagmar's much-loved son was brought to the grave in a shooting accident. After the death of Dagmar, he had married Berengaria, a Portuguese princess, who was apparently as much hated as Dagmar was beloved. None of the three sons of Berengaria, Eric, Abel and Christopher, held out the promise of being worthy of their father. Yet Eric was crowned King in 1232 and acted as co-sovereign until the death of his father nine years later.

The coming of Christianity in the last two centuries brought radical changes to the life of the Danish people. The power of the Church was no less strong than in other European countries. As represented by the great Absalon, the Danish Church firmly declined to bow to the papal conception of a world state under papal supremacy. To Absalon a worldly

¹ There is some confusion amongst historians as to what exactly Valdemar preserved of his conquests after Bornhöved.

ANCIENT LAWS

sword was just as essential to man's well-being as the sword of the Church, but with this reservation he placed the Church as high as anything.

Though many Danish kings in the Middle Ages gained repute as law-givers, there was never a moment when the people were denied the right to make laws. For a long period the local Landsting was the birthplace of its peculiar laws, though in most cases royal consent was needed before a law could come into force. There existed in reality no universal law. All attempts to foist Roman and Saxon laws on Denmark failed because of the predilection of the people for the practices and customs of their ancestors.

The oldest of the Danish laws was the civil law of Scania, which was introduced soon after the accession of Valdemar the Victorious. Of the two laws for Zealand which bear the names of Valdemar and Eric, that of Valdemar is regarded as the oldest. Eric's law was more comprehensive than Valdemar's, which dealt mainly with the rights of family and inheritances, and with the right of punishment. The law for Jutland, which, like the others, was written in Danish and not in Latin, was the most important of these provincial laws and is best known in history. That it was exclusively Danish is shown in its entire freedom from foreign influence. Its authorship is uncertain. The law itself gave the credit to King Valdemar, acting in consultation with his three sons, the Archbishop and seven bishops and all the highest men in the kingdom. The King submitted the law to a general assembly (*Danehof*) at Vordingborg in 1241. Applied to Jutland in the beginning, it was adopted later as the law for Zealand and Scania. It was first superseded by the law of Christian V, but in parts of Schleswig it continued in use until the year 1900.

The terms of these laws were exceptionally mild and a fine was the usual form of punishment. The Danes had been so long used to settle their own accounts and were not yet prepared for a state of complete subjection to a judicial authority. The greatest difference from modern practice was that imprisonment as a form of punishment was either unknown or regarded as too great a burden for the State, though the King had plenty of room in his castles for state offenders. The severest penalty

DIVISION OF CLASSES

that could be inflicted on the man who offended against his neighbour was outlawry. Everyone was free to kill an outlaw ; a fine was imposed on those who gave him shelter and even a cloister was closed to him. Occasionally an outlaw could " make peace with the King " by purchasing his freedom, but not before he had compensated the injured party. Justice was administered in the regional and provincial courts through jurymen. If anyone was dissatisfied with the sentence passed in the regional court, he could appeal to the provincial court. The first was presided over by a sheriff, whose duties were to maintain order and to exercise the laws. The kings had no judicial powers until the end of the thirteenth century when a King's Court was established.

The mediaeval Dane did not only accept the Christian belief that it was part of man's nature to be free from coercive authority : he was equally persistent in believing that lordship and servitude were reciprocal consequences of the Fall. To the Danes of those days it mattered not in which part of the state man was born, or what position he held in the community. Except for the *traelle* (serf) he was theoretically on an equal footing with all citizens. In the thirteenth century the state of thralldom disappeared. In the path of freedom Denmark advanced farther than the other northern countries. The citizen was named *bonde* (literally peasant) by which was meant a free man. The word *herre* (lord or master) was only applied to princes and members of the Royal Family. The *herremand*, which word first appeared in the Jutland law of 1241 and in the Municipal law for Copenhagen (1254), meant a man under a king—*homo dominorum qui vulgariter dicitur herremaen*. His was a privileged class. In a deed of gift to the Cathedral of Lund, Archbishop Eskild described *bundones* as persons of rank and position in the kingdom ; but this only applied to the leading, prosperous peasants. Men who served in the army or did daily service to their master had special rules attached to them. Kings, dukes and counts and spiritual heads—all were surrounded with a bodyguard of warriors. A house-carl could live on the land at any distance from the castle as in England in the time of Canute.

As an essential unit of the army the cavalry was beginning to

A NEW NOBILITY

exert an influence on the development and formation of a privileged nobility. Since the battle of Fodevig the use of cavalry became more and more common. That it did not lead to the immediate development of a special military caste was due to a decline in the war-like fervour that had hitherto characterised the Danes of all classes. Further, the falling revenues of the Royal Household, which were no longer equal to the maintenance of a large cavalry force, compelled the kings to adopt the expedient of conferring noble rank and freedom from taxation on those who were ready to give military service. Many land proprietors, who were keen and accomplished horsemen, begged the right of admission to the nobility so as to enjoy such privileges. As part of their services, these men had to "expose their heads for the repose of the King and the country." As they now sufficed for the military needs of the country, a great part of the population could fall back on more peaceful pursuits. Whilst the clergy and the new nobility were marching forward in the amassing of wealth and in the arrogation of privileges, the order of the peasants was beginning to lose its former hold on the affairs of government and, still worse, was descending in the social scale from owner to leaseholder. A natural result of the gradual formation of a separate military caste was that it sapped the pride and self-respect inseparable from national military service, though the will was also absent.

In the words of Saxo, Valdemar the Great, in view of the repugnance of the peasants to take part in expeditions against the Wends, abstained from submitting to the National Assemblies questions of war and peace. What hurt the peasant also hurt the landowner. The new-born towns were drawing labour from the countryside, and, apart from this, many of the landowners were impoverished by civil wars and were forced to give up their estates. Notwithstanding, the peasant proprietors were still an important order and continued to enjoy within limitations civil rights in the assemblies. The law for Jutland itself laid down that "no decision could be made that was contrary to a law promulgated by the King and adopted by the people." But, through the elevation of the clergy and the nobility, the Danish monarchs were before long to find themselves powerless in a struggle against these two orders.

THE PEASANTS

The peasants were divided into several classes. To the first class belonged the proprietors or noble peasants (*Adel-bönder*) who had the exclusive rights to their lands. After these came the farmers who leased a property for which they paid a certain rent. The farmer or tenant could not be a juryman or a conjuror. At the beginning, the relations between the two were not oppressive. Though without the privilege of ownership, the farmers could in those restless days count on the protection of the bigger landowners. A new and separate class was the *bryder*, i.e. the bailiffs or managers of the estates; the term could also be applied to the servant who superintended the cultivation of the land and the upkeep of the house. As distinct from these were the *faellesbryder* or associated bailiffs who owned a part of the cattle and the implements of husbandry. Later in the Middle Ages the *bryder* ceased to be a separate class and were amalgamated with the farmers. The last in this social order was the small tenant, who might be compared to the modern small-holder.

From the oldest days the system of collective cultivation was used in agriculture, but it was not communism in the modern sense. The right of ownership was never disputed. Villages (*landsby*) with their community settlements were an ordinary feature of the times. Collectivism meant that each person's land was regarded as a quota part of the whole village land and that his share and use of the common pasture (*overdrev*) was determined according to the quota. The same methods of cultivation were practised by all in the same community. Everyone's plot of land was considered a part of the whole. Different methods of cultivation were used in all parts of the country. Each peasant possessed an enclosure in the village itself which must be of the same size as all others or equally good. The more prosperous of the peasants usually cultivated a part of open land or leased it out to farmers. When the smaller developed into larger villages, they went under the name of *torp* with variations such as *strup*, *drup* and *rup*. Older are the villages whose names end with *by*, *lev* and *løse*.

As already noted, the Viking period brought with it the greater independence of women. When they remained at home and saw their husbands and relations wandering forth on

POSITION OF WOMEN

expeditions, they were impelled by necessity to undertake many duties outside the range of the household. Many a widow or maiden was called on to administer domains and properties. The knowledge that came to them of foreign lands changed their ideas of life and widened their interests. The coming of Christianity also played its part in raising the status of women. Notwithstanding that marriages of the clergy, the nullification of marriages and divorces were combated by the leaders of the Church, it was still considered a part of homely discipline that a husband should punish his wife and daughter with the staff and the rod. In the rights of inheritance recorded under the law of Jutland, a woman was allowed to inherit one-third of an estate : in Zealand and Scania she was entitled to one-half, and in certain cases to an equal share. An unmarried woman was treated as a minor whatever her age. So long as her father lived she stood under his protection until she was married. If she was under the guardianship of others who refused to find her a husband, she could make a petition to the Court when the King would intervene. Widows, on the other hand, enjoyed full freedom whatever their age.

In a time when popular ditties became the fashion dancing also came into its own. Men and women joined in a chain dance, following one another hand in hand. In all probability the impulse to poetise and dance came from France, though poetry as then known in Denmark had its own peculiarities and differed from the French in being epical, not lyrical. In addition to poetry the Danes were also developing a taste for music, which the Catholic Church had inculcated in the people in the form of sequences and hymns. The sequences were simple and easily entered into man's consciousness. The hymns had their origin in old-time poetry, a regular construction with all the strophes accompanied by the same melody. They were a near approach to the modern psalms.

The most significant fact that emerged from the intimate and friendly relations between Valdemar the Great and three successive Popes was the simultaneous decline in the influence of the Archbishops. The change came about after the time of Eskild and Absalon and was due less to their successors than to the marked personality of Valdemar the Victorious. The

THE DANISH CHURCHES

greatest prelate in Valdemar's time, both in learning and strength of character, was undoubtedly Bishop Gunnar who died in his hundredth year as Bishop of Viborg. He was of all men the one who enjoyed most the confidence of the King. The liberality which characterised Valdemar's attitude towards the Church was preserved through the whole of his reign. In the appointments to the bishoprics he interfered little, though his moral influence was great. In the religious life of this period, every movement seemed to indicate that the old era had closed and that a new one was breaking forth. With the death of Abbot William, the last of the Danish saints, the Danish Church was guided by other men than the pious monks of the old days.

If the Danes had been slow in accepting Christianity, they made ample amends in their feverish observance of the new religion. At early morn church bells called men to prayer. When the afternoon bells began to ring, they bent the knee and recited Ave Maria three times over. Not only meals but the daily work began with prayers. The consecration of the Church was invited whenever a house or a ship had been built. Though the converts hated their ancient gods, they still feared them. The Church had in fact taken superstition into its service.

The most beautiful of Danish churches date from the beginning of the thirteenth century. The old wooden churches have as good as disappeared. Calcareous tuff was the more often used in the construction of the oldest stone churches, as for instance in the building of the original Cathedral in Roskilde and the Church in Odense where the remains of Canute the Saint were laid to rest. But these churches lasted no longer than their wooden predecessors, and bricks, sandstone and hard stone came into use. Churches in the thirteenth century were built in the Roman or the round arch style. One of the oldest preserved is the St. Laurentius Church in Lund, which was begun in the twelfth century. The Cathedrals of Viborg and Ribe, which resemble one another, belong to the same period. One of the largest in size is probably the cloister church built by Absalon in Soró as a family burying-place, but there remains little of the original structure. Without a doubt

COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Roskilde Cathedral guards the most historical memories. Most depressing in appearance is the Cathedral in Schleswig, which guards the remains of Frederick I and his wife. It is to be regretted that many of the works of art that once beautified these churches have succumbed to covetousness, ignorance or indifference, though many of the fine old altar tables survived the coming of Lutheranism.

Commerce opened a new source of revenue for the kings when it inaugurated the levying of duties on imports and exports. Of natural resources, the breeding of livestock was the most remunerative ; next in importance was the fishing industry, which flourished particularly in the Lenten season. The Sound, the Limfjord and the waters of Scania all abounded in fish of every kind. The Baltic Sea and Holstein became the thoroughfares for trade with North Germany, Russia and the Baltic States, and the North Sea provided the avenue for trade with England and Holland. Coinage was scarce and goods were either bartered for goods or paid for in weighed silver. The principal exports were in cattle, horses and fish, and imports consisted of wines, salt, wheat, iron and fabrics. Market towns were growing up all over the land and for protection nestled around the fortified castles. The great majority of existing towns in Denmark were already there in the middle of the thirteenth century. It was a time also when the relations between Denmark and Germany were changing and Danish kings were looking for their wives in that land.

Erudition was practically confined to the higher ranks of the clergy who had been trained in the famous schools of Paris. A Danish college was attached to the University of Paris at the end of the twelfth century and was for a long time regularly attended by Danish ecclesiastics. The interest taken by Canute the Saint and the Valdemars in the building of church schools merely assisted the young in learning the rudiments of Latin and the prayers used in divine service ; those who desired to enlarge their education must go abroad. At the end of this period Absalon's intimate relations with the leaders of the French clergy, the marriage of a Danish princess to Philip Augustus and various other circumstances brought France and Denmark closely together. The Danish language, however,

DANISH AND NORWEGIAN LANGUAGES

was losing some of its original purity because of the influence of the German tongue. The three northern countries also began to differ in their pronunciation of words, so much so that the idiom of Norway earned the title of a Norwegian language. Whilst the Danish people spoke their own language at public meetings, there was no departure from the habit of translating all documents into Latin.

The first hundred years after the death of Valdemar the Victorious were a dark and disastrous period in Danish history. It was also dark in the sense that in few other periods has historic material been so scanty or so unreliable.

CHAPTER VI

ERIC, Valdemar's eldest son, was on his accession a young man of 25 years. In learning, appearance and honesty of purpose, he was beyond reproach. At first, his pious instincts were to gain him the respect of the Church. Only three months after his accession he wrote down the wish that he should be dressed on his death in the robes of a Grey Friar and buried in their cloister at Roskilde. But the young monarch had neither the strength of character nor the ability to steer the country through difficult times. The nearest neighbours to Denmark were her superiors in cultural development, though not in power. The German princes had long since freed themselves from a dependence on the peasants for their military requirements. So it was with the peasants of both countries, but with the difference that the peasants in the German principalities made amends for their loss of political freedom and influence by assiduously applying themselves to the colonisation of lands so far as the Danish frontier. Also in the promotion of commerce Germany far outpaced Denmark. It was therefore not the princes themselves but the peasants and tradesmen of Germany that constituted the danger. The new Danish King had inside his own realm to reckon with a nation divided into classes with different and oft-conflicting interests.

The political outlook, though still overshadowed by the disaster of Bornhöved,¹ could not be regarded as wholly discouraging after ten years of peace. Many thought that Denmark, after the old King's death, was in a stronger position than her neighbours. Internal disrapture in Norway and Sweden did not portend any immediate dangers from the North, nor need Denmark be over-concerned about her southern neighbours; the German princes in the possession of small lands were always quarrelling among themselves. Dangers there were, without and within, but they were below the surface.

¹ See page 67.

Already in 1242, according to the chronicles, "there arose enmity between the brothers King Eric and Duke Abel." The *origo mali* was the marriage of Abel to Mechtild, the daughter of Denmark's old enemy, Count Adolph IV of Holstein. It was the first beginning of a Schleswig-Holstein union. When Count Adolph had retired to a cloister after the battle of Bornhöved, Abel had taken over the administration of Holstein in place of Adolph's young sons who were being educated in Paris. Eric therefore thought it a convenient moment for restoring the province to Denmark, and he turned to Abel as his feudatory for assistance. Abel countered this plan by forming an alliance with Lübeck, the Mecklenburg princes and the Archbishop of Bremen.

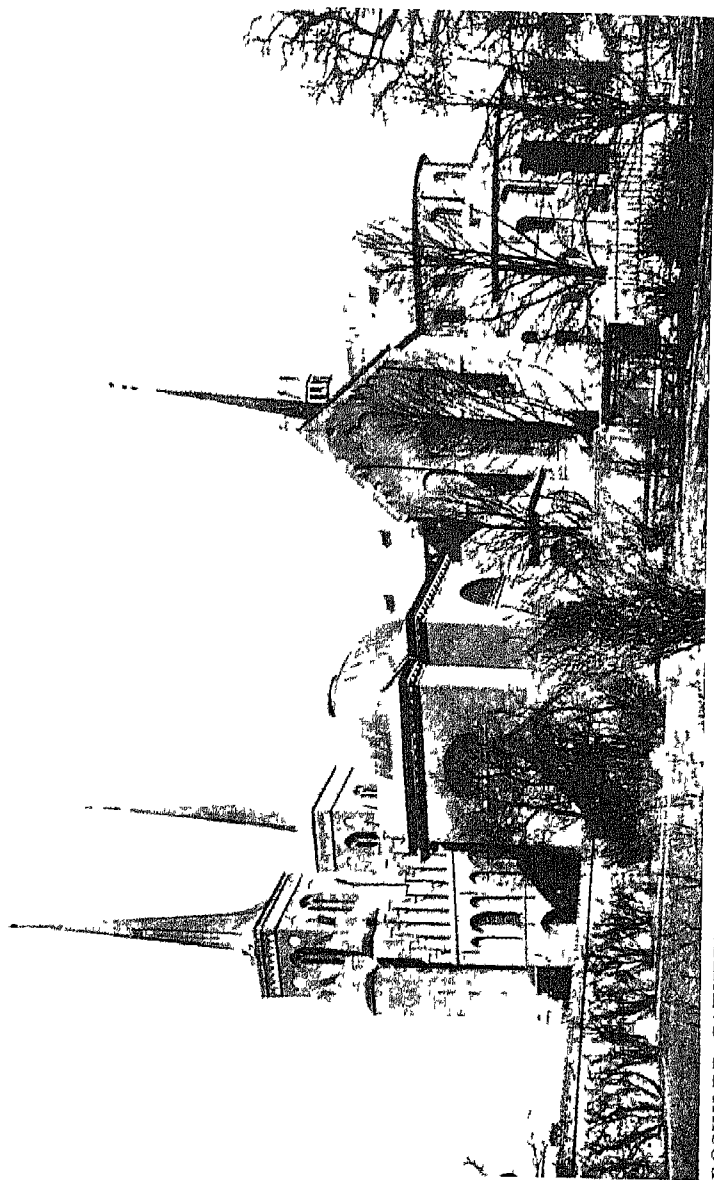
In these circumstances common sense recommended Eric to fraternise with the mighty Church and to benefit from a friendship he had formed with Pope Innocent IV during his student days in Paris. In token of this friendship Innocent had allowed him one-third of the ecclesiastical tithes for a period of six years. Not content with this concession Eric exacted from the bishops the payment of enormous taxes to enable him to make war on Abel. The indignant Archbishop and all the bishops summoned a meeting at Odense, in which they threatened to excommunicate all those who, from hatred or pleasure, had attacked the rights of the Church. Having made enemies of the clergy, Eric proceeded to antagonise the peasants by introducing a plough tax, which gave him the nickname of Plough-penny (Plovpenning). When he presented this proposal, in persuasive terms, to the Landsting in Lund, he was forced by the indignant peasants of Scania to fly to Helsingborg and from there to make an escape at dead of night across the Sound in a small rowing-boat.

It was no wonder that Eric felt compelled to relinquish his schemes of aggrandising his power beyond the frontiers. The friction between him and his brother lasted, with brief intervals of peace, until his death. Though Eric instigated a civil war, it was Abel who took the offensive. In 1247 Abel entered Fünen with his forces, burnt the town of Odense and, in Jutland, succeeded in capturing Ribe. He was helped not only by Germany but by many of the leading men in Denmark

SHORT REIGN OF ABEL

and his brothers Christopher and Canute. But the fortunes of war suddenly turned in Eric's favour. He reconquered Ribe and a year later captured the fortress of Arreskov in Fünen. But this was not the end of hostilities. In the summer of 1249 the Lübeckese, despite a strong resistance, entered Copenhagen and destroyed Absalon's castle. Yet a year later Abel was brought to complete subjection after a surprise attack that placed the town of Schleswig in the King's hands. Eric was then at the height of his power and might have followed up his successes but for a misplaced confidence in his brother which sprang from purely Christian motives. When staying as the trustful guest of Abel in the ducal castle of Schleswig, he was traitorously taken captive and, enchained, put out to sea in a boat which was before long intercepted at sea by his pre-hired murderers. After his last wish had been gratified, that a priest should be called to whom he could confess his sins, he was taken out again to sea and decapitated. Though Abel proclaimed his innocence, all his contemporaries were confident that he was guilty of Eric's death and maintained that the new King "was only Abel by name but in reality a Cain."

Without any opposition, Abel was crowned king at Roskilde on All Saints' Day, 1250. Although he swore before the Assembly at Viborg that he had not ordered his brother's death, a recent discovery by fishermen of the mutilated body of Eric seemed to prove the opposite. Like his father, Valdemar the Victorious, Abel clung to the title of Duke of Jutland. While not demonstratively at enmity with the Church, he wielded a high hand in the appointments to the vacant sees. Outside the sphere of conquests and defeats in the field, he brought peace and order to his kingdom and did much to promote trade with the Baltic lands, particularly in the restoration of the rights of the Hanseatic towns to trade with Denmark. As the case with many of his predecessors, he incurred the odium of the people by imposing exorbitant taxes. The greatest objectors were the Frisians, who were practically independent of Denmark and only paid an annual land tax. This sturdy folk, resenting the invasion of the Eider State by Abel's troops, attacked and defeated him at Husumbro, near Mildeborg, in 1252. While attempting to escape, Abel was killed by a wheelwright.



ROSKILDE CATHEDRAL

CHRISTOPHER I

Unusual as it was that a deceased King's sons should be passed over in the succession, Christopher I, a son of Valdemar the Victorious, could plead the extenuating circumstance that Valdemar, Abel's eldest son, was then in the custody of the Archbishop of Cologne, who had held him for a ransom on his return from his studies in Paris. Christopher might well have anticipated, when he allowed the crown to be placed on his head on Christmas Day, 1252, that he was laying the seeds of the interminable feuds that were to disturb the peace of the Royal House in succeeding generations.

The Counts of Holstein hesitated not a moment to take up arms on behalf of the young Valdemar. After purchasing his freedom for 6,000 marks silver but long before his return, they invaded Denmark and within a short time occupied Schleswig and took prisoner its bishop Eskild, who had crowned Christopher. In the following year a German knight, Henry of Emmeltorp, appeared as the King's opponent in the Danish isles and defeated Christopher's forces in a battle at Skelskør (Zealand). The King thereupon retired to Copenhagen to find its gates closed against him by the Archbishop Jakob Erlandsön. The situation required careful handling. A Norwegian and Swedish army was preparing to cross the frontier but was held back by the promise of monetary compensation. If the money was not payable within a certain time, Norway would retain Halland in pawn. Peace was also made with the Holsteiners at Kolding in 1253 on Christopher undertaking to hand over South Jutland to the young Valdemar. Concessions had also to be made to the German princes who had come to Christopher's aid. Henry of Emmeltorp returned home from Skelskør with a rich booty.

Having by these sacrifices set the crown securely on his head, Christopher entered upon a lifelong struggle with the Church and its Archbishop, Jakob Erlandsön, who, as a member of the powerful family of Skjalm-Hvide, was born with a hatred of the Royal House. The prelate's mind was saturated with high ideas on the power and authority of the Church. He would place the Danish Church on the same independent footing as in other countries. He was a stern upholder of the Canon Law, of which he possessed a profound knowledge. As

FIGHT WITH JAKOB ERLANDSÖN

Danish Archbishop he claimed the exclusive right of the Church to appoint its own officers and the right of the Canon Law to take precedence over all civil legislation.

Jakob Erlandsön threw down his first challenge to the King when demanding that the ecclesiastical laws of Scania should be altered because of their incompatibility with the Canon Law. In the confusion that followed, some sided with the King, others with the Archbishop. At the head of the opposition stood the Archbishop's own brother, Nils Erlandsön. A church meeting held at Vejle in 1256, which was attended by bishops and prelates from the whole country and was intended to bring unity to the Church, passed a resolution which only aggravated the dispute. It was to the effect that, when a bishop was imprisoned or otherwise molested in his person by the King, all church services would cease. In reality the Archbishop only won a half-victory. The resolution was only passed by a small number of bishops and many of them went into immediate opposition to him. The King hesitated one year before he took the vital decision of allowing an open letter to be read in the Assembly at Lund, announcing his decision to deprive the Archbishop and his clergy of all the rights and privileges which had been conferred on them by the Danish crown. It ordered them to declare their loyalty to the Crown within fifteen days ; otherwise they would lose everything and be compelled to do service as peasants. The Bishop of Viborg, who bore the letter to the Archbishop, was excommunicated for having recognised laws which violated the freedom of the Church.

Feeling that the ground was slipping under his feet, Jakob Erlandsön began intriguing with the Norwegian King and Prince Jarimar of Rügen who was hostile to Christopher for some unknown reason. Fortunately for the King, Birger Jarl, the King of Sweden, was an ardent peace-maker so that, when a Norwegian fleet of 300 ships arrived in 1257 on a mission of peace or war, both countries were able to agree to waive all claims for compensation for past wrongs. A general reconciliation followed, over which all rejoiced save the Archbishop and Prince Jarimar. Yet more important was the agreement of all the three northern countries to assist one another against all enemies.

IMPRISONMENT OF ARCHBISHOP

The death of young Valdemar in 1257 revived in an acute form the position of South Jutland within the kingdom. As he was unmarried, the fief reverted to the Danish crown and, according to the German feudal law, a fief could only pass on to a son. Legal niceties made, however, little appeal to the mind of the imperious Queen Dowager Mechtild who was determined to restore the rights of her young sons, Eric and Abel. Her natural allies were her brothers, the two Counts of Holstein. This group was quickly joined by the Archbishop and Prince Jarimar. Within a few months of Valdemar's death, the Holstein counts invaded Jutland and Jarimar landed in Zealand. All that can be said with certainty of this period is that Christopher made himself the master of South Jutland and easily quashed a revolt of peasants in Zealand.

These ceaseless quarrels with Abel's heirs did not augur well for Christopher's plans to assure the succession to the throne of his only son Eric. He decided, nevertheless, that he would not merely content himself with the boy's proclamation as Crown Prince but would also have him crowned as King. The Archbishop refused to give his approval and threatened to excommunicate anyone who dared to perform the ceremony. In the firm conviction that the Archbishop had no other purpose than to wrest the crown from his hands, the King took the extreme step of ordering his imprisonment. Jakob Erlandsön's own brother was entrusted with this duty. Seized at night-time in his estate at Gislebjerg, Jakob was taken as prisoner to the King's castle Hagenskov in Fünen and treated in the most brutal manner. His imprisonment without sentence was an offence against the laws of the land and the Church. Yet most of the bishops and clergy obeyed the orders of the King to disregard the interdict that followed: the Bishop of Roskilde after fulminating it from his pulpit, thought it more prudent to flee the country. Little time passed before the friends of the Archbishop came to his assistance. Prince Jarimar invaded and laid waste Bornholm, and, with the assistance of Jakob's brother, Anders Erlandsön, siezed the Royal castle. Soon afterwards Eric, Mechtild's son, and Jarimar sailed for Zealand and took possession of Copenhagen. In this critical moment

ERIC KLIPPING

King Christopher died suddenly at Ribe, on the 29th May 1259, poisoned, it was said, by the Abbot Arnfast.

Eric Klipping, the ten-year-old son of Christopher, inherited an uneasy throne. Although he had the good fortune to possess in his mother, Margaret, a very able protector during his years of minority, his earliest years as king were attended with disaster. Margaret was famed as an intrepid rider for which she was named the "horse-breaker": for her swarthy complexion she was given the additional nickname of "Black Greta." Although she had at her side Count Ernst von Gleichen and the bishops of Jutland, her position was unusually difficult. While Prince Jarimar was devastating Zealand and the Counts of Holstein were threatening an attack from the South, her thoughts naturally turned to the promises made to her husband by the Kings of Norway and Sweden.¹ But before help could come the royal army suffered a serious defeat at Naestved at the hands of Prince Jarimar. Only the arrival of King Haakon IV with a large fleet saved Zealand from further destruction. Jarimar left the country, and his adventurous career was ended by the knife of a peasant woman.

On Christmas Day, 1259, Eric was crowned at Viborg by one of the bishops of Jutland. Jakob Erlandsön, whom Margaret had released from prison to gratify the Pope, promptly excommunicated all the bishops who had been present at the ceremony and had the effrontery to appoint to the vacant see of Aarhus the Abbot Arnfast, the reputed murderer of Christopher. Having failed to appease the Archbishop, Margaret was no more successful in her attempts to make peace with Abel's son, Eric. Only two years after she had conceded to him the Duchy of South Jutland to the content of himself and the Holstein counts, Eric changed his mind. A battle was fought at Lohede, south of the Danevirke, which ended in the complete defeat of the royal army. The King and Margaret were taken prisoners. Margaret was taken to Hamburg, but secured her release within nine months by surrendering to Eric the crown lands of South Jutland. As a safeguard for peace, Eric Klipping was held in custody by the Margrave of Brandenburg until his release in 1264.

Now that the country was free from foreign enemies,

¹ See page 80

DEATH OF JAKOB ERLANDSÖN

Margaret could direct all her energies to effecting a reconciliation with the Archbishop. As her first overtures only increased his obduracy, she laid her complaint before the Pope Urban IV. But the friendly dispositions of the Papal Court under Urban changed with the advent of a new Pope, Clement IV. Though Urban had forced Jakob to surrender his see because of his tyrannical behaviour, Clement took another line after a personal visit of the Archbishop. A new Legate, Guido, was sent to Denmark and on his arrival he cited the King to appear before him in Schleswig. Eric rightly refused to meet him in an enemy city and appealed to the direct judgment of the Pope. Oblivious to this appeal, Guido condemned the King to pay a large indemnity and, on his refusal, placed the country under an interdict. Not even the Queen-Mother in a visit to Rome could soften the attitude of the Pope. She was forced to pay the Archbishop a heavy indemnity and to reinstate him in his position. By the irony of fate and to the satisfaction of Margaret, Jakob Erlandsön died in 1274 on his way to Denmark. There was also a touch of irony in the appointment to the Archbishopric of one of Jakob's brothers who had been on the King's side and for it had been excommunicated by Guido. Although the Vejle resolution had been momentarily forgotten, it was not long before it came to be accepted and the elections of archbishops and bishops were freed from royal interference. Margaret died at Rostock in 1282.

King Eric had been declared of age on his fifteenth birthday and in 1273 married his betrothed, Agnes of Brandenburg, who presented him with a number of sons and daughters. A year before, he had been encouraged by the death of Duke Eric of South Jutland to take immediate possession of the Duchy on the pretext that the Duke's sons, Valdemar and Eric, were minors. Although the public had stood by him in the struggle with the Church, Eric's government was not generally popular. It was not wholly his fault that the country should be given up to acts of lawlessness and violence from which the clergy most suffered. The main reason was that the laws of the land were inadequate to control passions or to punish offenders. Conditions were yet worse for the lower classes, particularly the peasants, who were bereft of all power. The King had now become the supreme

RISING POWER OF NOBILITY

executor of the laws. The chief significance of this period lay in the gradual abandonment of the former understanding between a democratic peasantry and a patriarchal king for a unified system in the hands of the new nobility. The gentry considered themselves free men and demanded a share in the King's decisions. They no longer felt themselves tied to the King by a sense of loyalty as the old bodyguard that had surrounded his person. Also the fact that they were now tax-free strengthened their sense of independence. The rights they claimed were little more than had been accorded to them in the time of the Valdemars and during the reign of Christopher I. The meetings of prominent men to discuss matters of importance—they were known as *Parlamenta*—were an annual institution. To these justifiable pretensions Eric responded by refusing to allow any more meetings to be held during six years.

The pent-up indignation of the nobility broke loose in 1282, when the King, in a meeting at Vordingborg of the "Kingdom's best men," was made to promise that a meeting (*hof*) should be held every year and that no one should be imprisoned unless he had been legally sentenced. These conditions were more clearly defined in a meeting held at Nyborg later in the year. In addition to the foregoing promises, the King undertook that no one should be punished by fines or in any other manner that was inconsistent with the laws of the country. He pledged himself to obey the laws of King Valdemar by which was meant existing laws. It was particularly insisted that the socages of the peasants on the King's lands should not be extended beyond his domains. No fresh burdens might be imposed on merchants, and the Church was to enjoy all the freedom it had possessed in the time of the Valdemars.

There exist no sources which explain this complete change in the royal front. In many of its features the charter of Nyborg bears a relation to the Constitutional measures taken by other European States in that century to curtail sovereign power. Only to a limited extent can it be compared to England's Magna Carta, though the underlying purpose was the same. For Denmark the particular significance of the Charter of Nyborg was that it set up for the first time a fixed parliamentary

ERIC MAENDVED

institution at the side of (and in opposition to) royal power. The new Parliament (*lof*) delayed not a moment in asserting its powers. Meetings were held every year and new laws were introduced. The impartiality with which it acted, as much in the interests of the King's enemies as of his friends, is the nearest available evidence that the King's hands had been forced. In 1283 he was compelled to enfeoff Duke Eric's son, Valdemar, with South Jutland. Though Eric was successful in frustrating Valdemar's wider pretensions to Als and the crown estates in Schleswig by the simple expedient of imprisoning him at Elsinore while he was on his way to Norway to obtain assistance, this success appears to have fortified his determination to ignore his duties towards the nobility. There began a widespread conspiracy in 1286 to remove Eric from the throne by force, which was aided by the treachery of the King's own retainers. Whilst he was resting at Finderup, near Viborg, after a day's hunting, the conspirators dressed as monks and conducted by the King's Chamberlain, who had betrayed his master, discovered Eric lying in a heap of straw and inflicted on him fifty-six wounds. He was the third King of Denmark in the course of thirty years to perish by the hand of an assassin.

Again the throne was inherited by a young child. Eric Maendved, the eldest son of the murdered King, was 12 years old on his accession and had been chosen as king ten years before. He had at his side the Queen-Mother Agnes and his father's loyal servants, the Constable Peder Hoseöl and the Chancellor Magister Mogensen. To avert the danger of Duke Valdemar reviving his pretensions to the Danish throne, Agnes decided to invite him to share with her the regency of the country. Valdemar accepted on being given Als and the crown lands of South Jutland, the rights to which he had recently renounced. The case of the regicides, which neither the Queen nor her advisers would allow to rest, was submitted to an Assembly in Nyborg in May 1287 and by it to the decision of a committee composed of the Queen Mother's brother, the Margrave Otto of Brandenburg, Prince Vitslav of Rügen and twenty-seven "good" noblemen. Count Jakob of Halland and Stig Andersson of the powerful Skjalm Hvide family and

SUBJECTION OF DUKE VALDEMAR

seven others were declared outlaws though their complicity in the murder of the late King was open to doubt.

On Christmas Day Eric was crowned king in the Cathedral of Lund by the old Archbishop Johan Dros. The outlaws left the country and found a safe refuge with the Norwegian King, Eric the Priesthater, who gave them the frontier fortress of Kongshelle. From this point they harried the Danish coasts incessantly in the following years. In July 1289 a Norwegian fleet appeared in the Sound and destroyed Elsinore. Though thwarted in the attempt to capture Skanör they carried death and destruction through the length and breadth of Zealand, Fünen, Langeland and the open coast of Jutland. They also coined false money which they distributed freely. They were masters at sea and made all the waters unsafe. But in the course of time the number of the King's enemies was reduced by natural causes: others fell into his hands to meet an ignominious end.

Meanwhile the relations between the Royal Family and Valdemar were beginning to cool. Suspicions of his disloyalty caused plans to be laid for his imprisonment; but the Duke escaped, declaring himself openly an enemy of Denmark. Heavy taxes exacted on cities and cloisters enabled the Danish fleet to put to sea. In 1295 Valdemar was overcome in a naval battle at Grönsund and in the same year peace was concluded between Denmark and Norway. Thereby the outlaws received permission to return and recover their estates on condition that they did not show themselves to the King. King Haakon V obtained his mother's estate and was allowed to retain a couple of his newly constructed fortresses in the Kattegat. Valdemar followed this example by signing peace with Eric two years later. He obtained all that he wanted, and had his brother Eric Longleg recognised as Duke of Langeland. Only by these humiliating concessions could the King restore peace.

He must now reserve all his strength for a fight with Jens Grand, the great nephew of Jakob Erlandsön, who, as the new Archbishop, made no concealment of his animosity towards the Royal House. It was much against the will of the King and his mother that the vacant Archbishopric should be filled by a man

FIGHT WITH ARCHBISHOP JENS GRAND

who was not only related to Jakob Erlandsön but to many of the reputed murderers of the late King. To gain his ends Jens Grand was ready to perjure his soul. No sooner had he sworn before the high altar that he would never be disloyal to the King and that he would hate the King's enemies than it became known that he was conspiring with them. In order to remove every impediment in the way of his election to the See, he received his office direct from the Pope. He thereafter withdrew all his assurances of loyalty to the King. On his return from Rome, he proceeded to restore the Vejle statutes. In defiance of the King he allowed the regicides to build inside his domains the powerful fortress of Hunebals and forbade his peasants, under pain of excommunication, to aid the King in the war against the Norwegians. His hatred of Eric went to the extreme of digging up the bodies of many of the King's true men and throwing them in to the sea.

The young impetuous King, thirsting for a fight, took the fatal step of imprisoning Jens Grand in the old State prison of Søborg : he confided this task to his younger brother, Christopher, whose artful and light-minded behaviour on this occasion did not speak highly for his character. The cruel treatment of the Archbishop was only in keeping with the rough and lawless methods of the time. He was bound head and foot to a post in a dark dungeon and was treated with such harshness that ulcers and abscesses formed all over his body. When this act of barbarism became known to the Pope, Boniface VIII, he sent a Nuncius, Isarn, to Denmark to work for the Archbishop's release, but, before he could arrive, Jens Grand had already escaped from his prison more dead than alive.

The process was then transferred to the Pontifical Court in Rome. The Archbishop won over the Pope with ease and, as might be expected, the judgment went wholly against the King : he was condemned to pay an indemnity of 49,000 silver marks and, until it was paid, the kingdom would be placed under an interdict. Although the interdict was no more respected than its predecessors, Eric's embarrassments at home and abroad recommended a reconciliation with the Pope. It took the form of a letter of submission.

ERIC GAINS GROUND IN NORTH GERMANY

I bid Your Holiness [he wrote], to show me mercy so that the whole Kingdom be not destroyed and its people do not perish, for it is but a flock, and what has it done? May the sword of Peter return to its sheath and may the representative of Christ or Christ himself heal thy servants's ear, so that I may return to the Church of Christ and hear the word of God. Whatever the burdens that Your Holiness lays upon my shoulders I will not refuse to bear them, however heavy they be. What more can I say? Speak, Lord and thy servant will obey.

The Pope, being hard pressed at the time by his relations with Philip IV of France, particularly welcomed this act of submission. The indemnity was greatly reduced and Jens Grand was transferred to the Archbishopric of Riga. The indignant prelate refused the offer and resided many years in Paris before he was appointed to the vacant See of Bremen. Here he too led a restless life in perpetual conflict with his subjects. He died in 1327 while he was visiting the Pope at Avignon.

It is easy to imagine the relief to Eric Maendved that he could now sign his release from the long-sustained fights against the regicides and Jens Grand and could buckle on his armour for ventures in foreign lands. No more pleasing picture could present itself to his covetous eye than the small German principalities, mutually distrustful, that lay huddled together in the lands south of the Eider. Holstein was then divided between three counts, each related to the other. Farther east were the divided lands of Mecklenburg, and farther on Pomerania. The common enemy was Brandenburg which was trying to extend its power to the Baltic.

In his eagerness to repeat the glorious feats of the Valdemars, Eric forgot that the times were very different. The expenses of war could only be met by heavy taxation and everyone, nobleman, peasant and townsman, was only thinking of his personal gain. As a basis for his plans, he obtained from the Emperor Albrecht I the renewal of the agreement with Frederick II which ceded to Denmark all the lands north of the Elbe. The principalities and towns surrendered to him one after another: the Princes of Mecklenburg, Rügen and Pomerania, and the towns of Lübeck and Rostock. In a few years King Eric had obtained a strong foothold in the north of Germany.

ENTANGLEMENTS WITH NORWAY AND SWEDEN

At this point Eric's attentions were drawn to events that were passing in Norway and Sweden. As the still-stand agreement with Norway was still in force, he could give his individual attention to Sweden. That country was in a state of ferment caused by the pretensions and intrigues of Duke Eric, a younger brother of King Birger, who from the moment of his betrothal to Ingeborg, the one-year-old daughter of King Haakon V of Norway, was to play the leading rôle in the North. He lost no time in showing his hand. Sweden and Norway formed a mutual alliance, and King Birger was persuaded to take under his protection such as remained of the Danish regicides. Eric Maendved's own brother, Christopher, entered into traitorous relationship with the Duke in the hope of removing his brother from the Danish throne. But a sudden quarrel between Birger and his two brothers, Eric and Valdemar, destroyed the plans for a Swedish and Norwegian alliance against Denmark, and Birger ended by declaring them both outlaws. The two dukes then sought help abroad ; they turned first to Eric Maendved, who received them coolly and then to Norway which gave them a better reception and handed over to them the important frontier castle of Kongshelle, the former retreat of the regicides. Birger acted with promptitude. He and King Eric, conferring on the frontier, decided to oppose by arms the pretensions of the two dukes. While a Danish army was invading North Halland, Birger seized his brothers' castles in Sweden and warded off an attempted invasion from Norway. In the following year the two brothers humbly submitted to Birger, but it was soon seen that Duke Eric was nursing other plans.

There were so many volcanic elements in the North that it was not surprising that peace was again broken in the year 1306. Eric Maendved, tired of the continuous raids on the Danish coasts by regicides, made a sudden attack on their stronghold in Hjaelm and reduced their castle to ashes. King Haakon, in revenge for what he considered an encroachment on Norwegian soil, sent a plundering expedition into Danish waters. At this time King Birger had fallen victim to his brothers and he and his wife Margaret were thrown into prison. Duke Eric evidently thought that the Danish King,

KING BIRGER OF SWEDEN

whilst at war with Norway, could do nothing for his relations in Sweden. Birger's young son escaped to Denmark and, on telling his tale, moved Eric to send another army to Sweden. But it was winter-time and neither side was disposed to fight. This respite was used by the Duke to spread a network of intrigues against Denmark and he found a natural ally in Eric's brother, the traitorous Christopher. With hired German troops they proceeded to ravage Scania. Once again a Danish army entered Sweden, not to fight but to negotiate. Probably from a feeling of distrust, King Haakon broke off his relations with the Duke and concluded a peace with the Danish King in Copenhagen. Under this agreement Haakon was given North Halland instead of his mother's estate, but as a Danish fief. The outlawed regicides were not to be allowed in Denmark, but their heirs had the right to sell their mothers' property. Finally, Haakon's daughter Ingeborg was betrothed to Birger's son Magnus in place of Duke Eric.

The moment seemed propitious for the restoration of Birger to the Swedish throne with Danish help. Though Eric's second expedition counted 2,500 armed horsemen and advanced as far as Nyköping fort, the winter was approaching, provisions were running short, a number of his men mutinied, and the fort was still holding out after a six-weeks' siege. Eric had no alternative but to withdraw his forces. This show of force was not entirely profitless : Duke Eric was forced to restore a great part of Sweden to Birger, who was now a free man. The three northern kingdoms settled all points of controversy in the Treaty of Helsingborg of 1310. The promises to restore certain parts of Sweden to Birger were confirmed. Duke Eric received North Halland as a fief from the Danish King while King Haakon looked on acquiescently.

In the next seven years there reigned comparative peace in the North. Weak and powerless, Denmark watched from afar two rebellious brothers tightening their grip on Sweden. Birger in final desperation resolved that treason should be requited with treason. On a December night in 1317 his two brothers, when staying as his guests at Nyköping Castle, were put in chains and left to die of hunger after many months' imprisonment. This gruesome act cost Birger his throne.

ERIC LOSES POWER IN NORTH GERMANY

Deserted by all, he fled to Denmark where he died shortly afterwards.

For many years Eric had lived at peace with the Principalities of North Germany who owed him subjection. But a turning-point came when the Margrave Valdemar of Brandenburg deserted King Eric and ranged his country against Denmark as of old. The last vestige of Eric's power in North Germany vanished when the Margrave helped the Hanseatic League to recover Stralsund. No money could purchase the waning loyalty of the German princes. When in later years Eric became reconciled to the Margrave, he took no further interest in North German politics. The freedom of Stralsund was recognised and Henry the Lion of Mecklenburg was enfeoffed with the Danish possession of Rostock. Feudal supremacy over Rostock and Rügen was the only reward that crowned Eric's adventures in Germany.

It was no wonder that the growing discontent amongst the hunger-stricken and over-taxed people finally vented itself in an insurrection. In 1312 "the King allowed many men to be hanged in Copenhagen." The uproar would have had little significance if it had not been supported by many leading men. During the whole of his reign, Eric was in open conflict with many of the nobility who objected to his close associations with the German princes and knights. The suppression of two revolts, one in Zealand and the other in North Jutland, only aggravated the lot of the peasants. In North Jutland they were made to pay an annual tax known as "a grain of gold" and to maintain the King's castles. Of the revolting nobility many were deprived of their estates or executed, and others fled the country. Eric next turned his anger on the Archbishop Esger Juel who had loyally supported him in his dispute with Jens Grand. Denied the sympathy and support of the clergy, the Archbishop put up little defence and was forced eventually to leave the country. Eric's brother Christopher was to suffer the same fate.

It helped the King nothing, however, that he should lay low the most dangerous of his opponents when the whole country had been impoverished and destroyed by his senseless policy. Worse was it that this process of bleeding dry the

DEATH OF ERIC MAENDVED

populace did not even suffice to pay his debts. To raise money he was compelled to pawn whole provinces and to hand Fünen to the Counts of Holstein, John the Mild, and Gerard. When he had done with his mortgages, there only remained to the Crown, free from encumbrances, Zealand and parts of Bleking and North Jutland. In his private life, Eric was no more fortunate. His worst and most dangerous enemy had been his brother Christopher. Of the fourteen children presented to him by his Queen Ingeborg, none survived their parents. The Queen's mind was known to be affected by these misfortunes and particularly by the act of treachery committed against her brothers at Nyköping. She died in 1319 and was followed to the grave three months later by King Eric.

CHAPTER VII

IT would have been the better for Denmark if the wishes of the late King that Christopher should not succeed to the throne had been faithfully observed. There were many, especially in Jutland, who favoured the election of Duke Eric of South Jutland for in this way the Duchy would revert to the Crown. It seems that selfish considerations alone influenced the leading men of the country when they chose a monarch whom they could bend to their will. The candidature of Duke Eric was anyhow banned by the reluctance of the Holsteiners to have a strong neighbour in the North. In these circumstances a Danish king was compelled, for the first time in Danish history, to give his oath before election to a Charter which left him only the shadow of power and only benefited the nobility and clergy. The privileges of these orders were now written in law and could not be attacked. The clergy could only be judged by their own profession and were, as before, exempted from all taxation; the nobles had the right to collect the fines inflicted on their peasants and were freed from military service in foreign countries. War could not be declared nor new laws made without the consent of these orders. No German might be enfeoffed with castles, fortresses or estates or have a seat in the Council. What must have pained Christopher most was the requirement that he must pay all the debts contracted by his predecessor.

Archbishop Esger, who was summoned back from his place of exile, performed together with a Papal Legate the ceremony of crowning Christopher II and his son Eric as joint kings in the church of Vordingborg. It was the first time in Danish history that a king's accession was made conditional to his acceptance of a Constitution. All vestiges of the government of the past twenty years were removed. The taxes levied in the time of Valdemar II were restored¹ and the outlaws were

¹ According to tradition.

HENRY THE LION OF MECKLENBURG

to have their estates returned to them. The King was, moreover, deprived of any initiative in the government of the country. There followed a complete reconciliation between the King and the Archbishop. It must be said that Christopher kept some of his promises. But in the conduct of his foreign policy he was less consequential.

It is true that, in his dealings with the North German States, Christopher began with no little success. Henry the Lion of Mecklenburg, since the death in 1319 of the Margrave of Brandenburg, had become the greatest threat to neighbouring States and, as a friend of the late King Eric, his name was anathema to Christopher. With Christopher at its head, a coalition of German princes was formed against Mecklenburg who, within a very short time, found herself completely isolated. In desperation Henry the Lion turned for help to the little Court in Varberg, Halland, which was ruled over by Ingeborg, the widow of the Swedish Duke Eric, and by her lover, Knud Porse, a man with boundless ambitions. But the intervention of Sweden quashed this plan and Henry's attempt to foment a revolution in Denmark likewise miscarried. All hope of making further mischief faded away after the victory of Ludwig of Bavaria at Mühldorf (1322). To obtain as firm a footing in North Germany as in the South, Ludwig enfeoffed his eight-year-old son Ludwig with the Margravate of Brandenburg and looked to Denmark to support the new Margrave. On these premises a marriage was arranged between the young boy and Christopher's daughter. A hand-shaking between the Danish King and Brandenburg was all that was needed to reduce to submission the small princes in the Baltic. Henry the Lion sought a reconciliation with Christopher and was given again the fief of Rostock.

However creditable these achievements, they made no appeal to those who desired that the King should concentrate all his energies on establishing peace in his own country and should keep to his promises. By wise savings the country might be restored to solvency and be rid of the abominable taxes which were increasing year by year. The alliances with the North German princes could only be maintained with good silver marks paid in taxes. To add to this, Christopher had fallen

CONSTITUTIO VALDEMARIANA

out with the most prominent of the nobility. Most powerful of all was the former High Constable Ludvig Albrektsøn, who broke with the King and begged the support of Count Gerard III, the guardian of young Duke Valdemar of South Jutland, in his efforts to overthrow Christopher. When it was known that Christopher intended to assert his claim to the guardianship of Valdemar, Gerard, with the lively sympathy of the nobility, proceeded to overrun Jutland and Fünen. Crossing to Korsør in Zealand he seized the young King Eric and led him in chains to Haderslev Castle. Mistrusting everybody Christopher fled the kingdom with his two sons Otto and Valdemar. A weak attempt to regain the throne with the help of Mecklenburg ended in failure.

The throne was declared vacant, and on the proposal of Gerard, who was to act as Regent, the young Duke Valdemar was elected King with still more limited powers than had been vouchsafed to Christopher. Of particular interest were the provisions that, during a king's lifetime, no other king could be elected, and that South Jutland should not be united to Denmark in such way that one and the same man is master over both (*Constitutio Valdemariana*). With the first of these provisions the country would be left free after the King's death to dictate all that it wished to his successor. In an Assembly at Nyborg, Valdemar III, with the approval of the bishops and nobility, surrendered to Gerard the whole Duchy of South Jutland as an hereditary fief and enfeoffed Gerard's cousin and ally, John the Mild, with Lolland, Falster and Femern.

The division of lands amongst John and Gerard and the tyranny of Gerard's government soon provoked general discontent and revolts in the provinces. In North Jutland it was a nationalist movement directed against the German régime in Denmark. It was easy for Gerard to suppress an armed revolt of peasants at Thorslunde in 1328 and attacks on Gottorp Castle by the men of South Jutland. John the Mild, most of all people, desired that Christopher should return to his throne and the Archbishop and the Bishops were of a like mind. When discontent at Gerard's rule spread to the nobility, Christopher thought that he was safe in returning, even if it

HUMILIATION AND DEATH OF CHRISTOPHER

were to cost him half his kingdom. On his return John the Mild received Scania and a large part of Zealand in fief. Valdemar, the dethroned monarch, had to content himself with South Jutland and in place of it Gerard was given Fünen as an inheritable fief.

Christopher could now consider himself King by the grace of Holstein. His only hope of obtaining full royal powers was to create a cleavage between the two counts of the Duchy. The opportunity presented itself when each count thought the other count had despoiled him of his rightful share of the lands. Together with his son Eric, Christopher advanced with an army into South Jutland but was forced to retreat after a one-day fight near the Danevirke. All that remained to the unfortunate Christopher was to obtain the best possible terms from the victor. On the 10th January 1332 at Kiel an agreement was signed which entailed the complete dismemberment of Denmark. When Gerard obtained North Jutland and Fünen, the two counts were practically masters of the whole country.

A king without a country, Christopher was driven out of his last retreat Saksköbing by two Holstein noblemen and was only released from imprisonment by the orders of Count John. Denmark's most pitiful king died at Nyköbing, in Falster, in 1332, having lost previously his son Eric who died as the result of a fall during the retreat from the Danevirke.

With Christopher dead, no attempt was made to elect a new king. The two counts toyed with their domains, behaved like kings, and levied heavy taxes. A number of German knights lived as feudatories in the Danish castles and were worse tyrants than their superiors. Scania, the first of the provinces to rebel, made offer of the land to King Magnus of Sweden who gladly accepted. The next attempt to break the power of the Holsteiners was made by Otto, the eldest son of Christopher, who, on his return from his place of exile in Germany, invaded North Jutland only to be defeated and taken prisoner near Viborg. The spirit of revolt was strongest amongst the peasants and the nobles who had turned against Christopher. They were beginning to wonder what they had gained under the new régime. "The country and nobility," wrote the Jutish chronicle, "who hoped to rule after the banishment of

REVOLT IN THE PROVINCES

Christopher were now plagued, imprisoned and reduced to serfdom." So deep was the despair that King Magnus, who now called himself King of Scania, asked the Pope's permission to conquer what he could of the leaderless land.

When all seemed lost, loyal Danes turned their thoughts towards Junker Valdemar, Christopher's younger son, as a possible saviour of the country. Valdemar himself had conceived the idea and the patriotic Bishop Svend of Aarhus left his See for Germany, where Valdemar was residing, to give him moral support. In every quarter of Denmark the spirit of revolt was rising. In North Jutland neither the smaller nobility nor the peasants could tolerate any longer the foreign yoke. Even Duke Valdemar of South Jutland got tired of it and entered into negotiations with Junker Valdemar.

Meanwhile with troops assembled from the Rhine and the Weser and with his sons, Eric and Klaus, Gerard had invaded Jutland destroying and burning everything in his path. The complete subjection of the land and its population seemed assured when Gerard in his quarter at Randers fell suddenly ill and as suddenly recovered. But the Danes were not for long defrauded of their prey. On a dark night in April 1340 a small body of Danes succeeded in entering the well-garrisoned city of Randers and passed themselves off as the "watchmen of the sleeping lord." Gerard was still up saying his midnight prayer with his chaplain when a loud noise was heard outside the house. The man he took for a passing night watchman was Nils Ebbesön. The Dane rushed in and slew him and his chaplain. In the general panic that followed and in the deep darkness Ebbesön and his followers passed out of the city unharmed. Some time elapsed before he was identified as the man who had saved his country in her most critical hour. Disheartened by this unexpected event, Gerard's hirelings fled from the country.

The ruin and desolation of the past years produced a great reaction, when Gerard was no more. Denmark's future king possessed a tireless energy, great powers of endurance, and a burning ambition. Three weeks after Gerard's death, his two sons, Klaus and Henry, hastened to Valdemar's side to enlist his aid against the insurrectionaries in Jutland. Negotiations

VALDEMAR ATTERDAG

at Spandau and Lübeck between the interested parties ended in an agreement which made Valdemar Atterdag king. His eldest brother Otto would be set at liberty on his renouncing any claim to Denmark's throne. King Valdemar was to marry a sister of the dead Count. Duke Valdemar of South Jutland agreed to surrender his possessions to the Counts of Holstein and to accept North Jutland in fief. The King reserved the right to repurchase from the Duke the rest of North Jutland which permitted the Duke in turn to wrest with money South Jutland from the Holsteiners. Fünen was recognised as the perquisite of the two Counts, if the King died without heirs : and the King was given the right to redeem Zealand from John the Mild. Valdemar was finally married to Hedvig, a sister of Duke Valdemar. With her dowry he bought back North Jutland.

The spectacle that Denmark presented in these days could be obliterated by none but a strong ruler. It showed a land subservient to the will of an upstart foreign nobility who paid no taxes, pocketed all they could, and enslaved their peasants, built castles and dominated all other classes. If the crown meant anything, unity must once more be restored. Denmark needed and was given a ruler who was more of a statesman than a fighter. It stood more to his credit than to his discredit that he had to toil patiently through many evil years before he could reach his goal. Jutland he left to look after itself while he gave his attention to the more pressing needs of Zealand which was in a state of complete chaos. Count John ruled only in name : the real power rested with a number of Holsteiner mortgagees. In his efforts to redeem his properties in favour of the crown, Valdemar was aided by the good will and sacrifices of the Zealanders, who for once paid taxes without demur, and of the bishops and foreign sympathisers. But this could not save him from ceding to Magnus of Sweden the possessive rights over Scania and from selling to the Teutonic Order Esthonia, a province which was useless to Denmark and was perpetually exposed to Russian and German attacks. With the limited means at his disposal, Valdemar could only concentrate on one point at a time, and in all vulnerable points only secure peace by propitiating a potential enemy.

DENMARK AIDS BRANDENBURG

The soil must be carefully prepared. Points of vantage he needed from which to direct his future operations. At the end of six years' labour the important fortresses of Copenhagen, Vordingborg and Kalundborg had passed into his hands, and a few years later he was in possession of the whole of Zealand, and the islands of Lolland, Falster and Møen. All this time the reacquisition of Jutland was pursuing its natural course. A king who on his accession only owned the northernmost part of Jutland was to rule over all the lands west of Öresund with the exception of the western half of Fünen and the south-west part of Jutland.

Having accomplished so much in so short a time, Valdemar felt that nothing was beyond his reach. Should he aim at the recovery of the western lands or the Scanian provinces which he had ceded to Magnus? Soon his thoughts turned in another direction—North Germany. The moral motive was not absent on this occasion. He was called on to help his brother-in-law the Margrave Ludwig of Brandenburg whose independence was threatened by the Emperor Charles IV. In 1349 Valdemar led an army into Brandenburg, occupied Berlin itself, and moved with such rapidity that the Emperor was forced to negotiate. In a meeting at Bautzen, Valdemar, by his powers of persuasion, not only succeeded in reconciling the Emperor and the Margrave but was presented by the Emperor with 16,000 marks silver. Also with another opponent, Duke Albrecht of Mecklenburg, the King was able to sign a satisfactory pact. The Duke was given Rostock as fief from Denmark and a marriage was concerted between Albrecht's eldest son and Valdemar's daughter.

Valdemar, however, failed in transferring to his own people his restless energy. After the disturbances of the past years they had lost the incentive to work and had sunk into lethargy. "Merchants, peasants, soldiers," wrote a contemporary, "are afraid to work lest they should not earn enough to give the King all the duties and taxes which he rigorously enforces." This popular discontent was utilised to the full by the nobles of Jutland when they led a revolt against the King in 1351. Duke Valdemar, whose friendship and loyalty to the King had not been rewarded according to his deserts, joined the malcontents.

PROCLAMATION OF KALUNDBORG

For many years they were held successfully at bay by Valdemar's forces. But in 1357, whilst the King was in Zealand negotiating an alliance with France against Edward III of England with the ulterior object of satisfying the old Danish claim to England, the dukes took the law into their own hands by invading Fünen and devastating the whole province. Attempts in various years to reach conclusions by the sword or by negotiation met with varying fortunes until St. Martin's Day, 1357, when Valdemar won a brilliant victory over the Holsteiners, near Brobjerg Castle, in the north-west of Fünen. In the following year Nils Bugge and the other leaders of the Jutish movement came to Slagelse to negotiate peace with the King. Embittered by the demands made on them, they retraced their steps and were murdered at Middelfart. The suspicion long hung over Valdemar that he had instigated the murder in spite of his protestations of innocence.

Having subdued Jutland, Valdemar made peace with Holstein and Mecklenburg, and Duke Valdemar submitted to him. On this latter occasion the King identified himself with his subjects in a remarkable document which was read before a large representative assembly at Kalundborg on Whit-Sunday, 1360. It was similar to the royal capitulations which inaugurated a reign. In it he promised to uphold ancient laws and customs. The Duke of Jutland and all others, great and small, were to enjoy their legal rights. The National Assembly of the nobles (*Danehof*) was to meet every year on St. John's Day. All acts of violence were to be severely punished. The sixth paragraph of the document is the most interesting. It conferred on the King the responsibility for protecting his poorer subjects. The National Assembly thus declared openly that they had only the legal right to protect the privileged classes. This neat distinction was to be of infinite importance to future kings.

Valdemar's hands were now freed for embarking on the long-deferred plan of reuniting to Denmark the Scanian provinces, and the disturbed state of Sweden lightened the task. The simple-minded Magnus, who had failed completely to bridle the indiscipline of his nobles, appealed to Denmark for help. Accompanied by his Queen Blanca and his son

DEFEAT OF THE HANSE AND PEACE OF VORDINGBORG

Haakon, he visited Copenhagen and, it appears, pledged himself to return the provinces to Denmark, if Valdemar assisted him in reducing to submission his rebellious subjects. The alliance was cemented by the engagement of Valdemar's daughter, then aged 7 years, to Haakon, the son of Magnus, who was aged 20. Valdemar promptly passed into Scania, occupied the whole province and took care to gain possession of the documents which attested the rights of Sweden to the provinces. Encouraged by his successes in Scania, the King armed himself for an expedition to Visby, in Gotland, which was one of the most thriving towns in Europe and the principal entrepôt for the trade of the Hanseatic League in the Baltic. It was also a valuable starting-point for rallies on the Swedish coast and for that reason remained a source of strife between Sweden and Denmark through three centuries. The town was taken and its walls laid in ruins. From this time the fame of Visby declined, for much of its commerce was transferred to Copenhagen.

The conquest of Gotland meant war with Sweden—Norway and the Hanseatic States also decided to take action. They immediately stopped all trade with Denmark and made ready with the Wendish States and with Sweden, Norway and Holstein, for a combined attack on Scania. In the spring of 1362 their fleet, under the command of Lübeck's burgomaster, Johan Wittenburg, set forth for the Sound and the siege of Helsingborg began. While the fort was holding out, Valdemar had time to arm a fleet with which to surprise the enemy. Twelve of its warships fell into his hands together with many prisoners, and the Burgomaster was executed on his return to Lübeck. Deserted by their allies, and while young Christopher, Valdemar's son, was sweeping over the southern part of Sweden, the States used for peace. It was concluded at Vordingborg on the 3rd September 1365.

By a happy coincidence, Elizabeth, the sister of the counts of Holstein, was on her way to Sweden in 1362 to be married to Haakon, the younger son of King Magnus. The ship was thrown on to the Danish coasts by a violent tempest and Elizabeth was taken to the Archbishop of Lund for safe custody. Being well disposed towards Valdemar, he pretended that the

FALL OF KING MAGNUS

marriage to Haakon was illegal because of his previous engagement to Valdemar's daughter, Margaret. The timely action of the Archbishop prepared the way for a full reconciliation between the two nations and Valdemar. The young Haakon came to Denmark accompanied by his father and mother, and the marriage with Margaret, a girl of 11 years, was celebrated in 1363. The unfortunate Elizabeth exchanged a marriage life for a monastic cell. The year before Valdemar's elder daughter had been married to Henry of Mecklenburg. As Valdemar's son, Christopher, had died from wounds inflicted during the fight with the Hanseatic fleet, the marriage of Haakon and Margaret became of political importance, for it opened the prospect that the two might one day wear three crowns. In this quietening atmosphere Valdemar departed on a journey to foreign countries in which he visited the Emperor Charles IV and Pope Urban V in Avignon.

During the absence of Valdemar the Swedish Rigsdag, aided by Holstein and the Hanseatic League, deposed Magnus and chose in his stead his nephew Albrecht of Mecklenburg. Valdemar must have been aware of these happenings but evidently thought it unnecessary to intervene. The ease with which he made peace on his return both with the League and Holstein seemed to justify this indifference. On the death of Duke Valdemar of South Jutland, his son Henry promptly submitted to the King. But Sweden was still the prey to internal quarrels. When Magnus was defeated at Gaata and taken prisoner, Valdemar agreed to waive the claims of Haakon to the Swedish throne. In return he received territorial concessions which gave him control over all the Scanian provinces and he also obtained recognition of all his former conquests.

In the years 1365-7 Valdemar was at the height of his power and peace seemed assured, internally and externally. From his fortified outposts he was able to maintain peace and order. His close friendship with the Popes enabled him to impose his authority on the Church, and he never lost touch with his leading councillors who were mainly the bishops and the leading noblemen. At the moment when Valdemar's power was stronger than ever, the storm broke where it was least expected. It embraced all his former enemies save the neighbouring states.

TREATY OF STRALSUND

War began from the Hanseatic side with the siege and capture of Copenhagen castle ; next fell Skanör and Falsterbo and the islands south of Zealand and Helsingborg. In these conditions Denmark could only follow the old-time policy of dividing the enemy ranks. Although the Hanseatic towns had good reason to complain of Denmark's interference with their commerce, they had no sympathy for the plans to overthrow the Danish kingdom. In an agreement signed at Stralsund (1370) thirty-seven Hanseatic towns were given full freedom to trade with Denmark and with all parts of the country, and the right of jurisdiction over their own subjects. It was also laid down that no new election of a king could take place without their co-operation.

In spite of the humiliation of Stralsund, Valdemar had no reason to despair. Now that the Hanseatic League had withdrawn from the fight, their principal associates, Mecklenburg and Holstein, gave up the game and returned to Denmark her conquests. At the same time Duke Albrecht of Mecklenburg obtained the recognition of his grandson, Albrecht the Young, as heir to the Danish throne. Valdemar's only remaining enemies were then in Jutland sitting in proud possession of their castles. He turned on them with his full strength and within a year reduced them to impotence. His last years were devoted to the consolidation of his position in South Jutland. After the death of Duke Henry in 1375, Valdemar could claim the Duchy both as the nearest heir and as Denmark's king. Everything pointed to a satisfactory solution of the South Jutland question when King Valdemar died on the 24th October 1375.

Posterity has acclaimed Valdemar Atterdag as one of the most remarkable of Danish kings. Contemporary records tell us little of his personality and private life. The poets of later days were wont to throw a romantic glamour around his name and his great love for Tovelille with whom he shared his joys and his sorrows in the castle of Gurre, his favourite place of residence. Of his married life with Hedvig still less is known. Of their six children only Margaret, the youngest, survived them. The reign of Valdemar Atterdag certainly ended more gloriously than that of Valdemar the Victorious.

DEATH OF VALDEMAR ATTERDAG

Both made the mistake of overestimating their powers to retain as much as they conquered. The last Valdemar, in spite of an overweening egotism and of *changing fortunes*, was able to leave a reunited Denmark to those who came after him.

CHAPTER VIII

AFTER the death of Valdemar Atterdag it behoved the Council of State, which was his own creation, to take over the administration of the country and to elect a new king. As he left no male heirs, the choice lay between his daughters' sons, Albrecht of Mecklenburg and Oluf of Norway.¹ The Danish Government did not feel themselves bound by Valdemar's promise that Albrecht should be the successor. To have favoured him would have given Mecklenburg a decisive influence both in Denmark and Sweden. By good fortune Margaret, Oluf's mother, was in Denmark at the time of her father's death and in a position to win support for her son by ingratiating herself with the leading men in Denmark. To the Bishop of Roskilde she returned his dear town of Copenhagen and within a year brought to her side Henning Podebusk, who had been Valdemar's friend and counsellor. The Hanse, who was unwilling to throw its weight on either side, held aloof. In May 1376 Oluf was elected King. Three years later died old Albrecht defeated of his aims to place his grandson on the Danish throne. The nobility, though they were careful to preserve their rights, showed a more conciliatory disposition in the terms they imposed on the new King. In Oluf's capitulation the right of kings to have elected their successor during their lifetime was restored.

In practice it was Margaret who, in the absence of her husband, was at the head of affairs although she cautiously allowed the Council a free hand in the first years of her Regency. On the death of Haakon VI in 1380, Oluf inherited his father's throne

¹ Valdemar IV, King of Denmark.

Margaret = Haakon, King of Norway.

Olaf, King of Norway and Denmark 1387

QUEEN MARGARET AND SWEDEN

and Margaret's personal authority waxed greatly with this new accession of power. From this time the Council of State became a mere shadow of its former self. To Margaret belongs the sole credit of recovering by peaceful and persuasive means the lands which had been pawned to the Hanseatic States.

The time had now come when Denmark, if she acquiesced any longer in the state of affairs existing in Schleswig, would be faced with the final separation of that province from the kingdom. While the enforcement of Denmark's hereditary rights to Sweden was hanging in the balance and Mecklenburg was threatening invasion, Margaret was not in a strong enough position to drive the Counts of Holstein out of Schleswig. She decided to take the apparently retrograde step of giving the Holsteiners Schleswig as an hereditary fief, but on condition that only the eldest of the family should be the ruling duke. Gerard VI was accordingly invested with the Duchy after rendering homage to the King and promising to serve as his vassal and give military aid. Margaret was now free to turn against the detested Albrecht of Sweden who had already opened hostilities by plundering Halland and Scania. At this moment she was afflicted by the sudden death of King Oluf at the age of 17.

For some years before the death of the old Duke Albrecht, who had been the virtual ruler of Sweden, the nation was in constant revolt against the misgovernment of the nobility, both Swedish and German. When the two at last drifted apart, the nation's indignation was reserved for foreign intruders and particularly the new King Albrecht. To play on these national sentiments was obviously to the advantage of Denmark. Hostilities, intermingled with negotiations, between Denmark and Sweden, which were continuous after the Duke's death, did not cease until after the death of young Oluf. The Swedish nobility, who had come to share the people's dislike of the King and his German satellites, dared not take up arms without the assured support of Denmark and Norway. Distasteful as it was to them to negotiate with the daughter of the hated Valdemar, they were given no other choice. Perhaps they were as apprehensive as the Hanse "of Margaret's wisdom and power." Almost immediately after Oluf's death the

BATTLE OF FALKÖPING

Swedish Councillors of State were bowing to every one of Margaret's demands. They elected her as Sweden's first "lady and mistress" and pledged themselves to accept as king the person of her choice. On her side Margaret promised to respect the same rights and privileges of the kingdom as had been accorded by Sweden's elder kings. Norway followed the example of the Swedish noblemen but, as an hereditary kingdom, went further in acknowledging Margaret's nephew Eric as her successor.

King Albrecht had now been shorn of all his possessions except Stockholm and Kalmar and a few fortified castles. Realising that his cause was desperate unless he could obtain foreign assistance, he departed for Mecklenburg and returned with a respectable number of mercenary troops. Whilst Albrecht was busy recruiting, Margaret had one army besieging Aksevallå in West Gotland and a Danish-Norwegian army was on the way to Halland. It arrived just in time to arrest Albrecht's advance on Aksevallå. Near Falköping, on the 24th February 1389, was fought the battle which settled for a long time the destinies of the northern countries. After a long-waged contest, Albrecht's troops were completely overmastered. He, his son, and many of the nobility of Holstein and Mecklenburg were taken prisoners.

The battle of Falköping consolidated Margaret's position in Sweden. One castle after another surrendered to the allied arms. The one remaining stronghold of the Mecklenburgers was Stockholm. Here the German elements founded a society known as the "Hat-brothers" from their headgear, who imprisoned or burnt any Swedish citizens they could lay their hands on. Their subjection was delayed many years by the operations of the "Victualling Brethren," pirates recruited in Rostock and Wismar, who provisioned the city and made all the Baltic unsafe. The Hanseatic towns, as the greatest sufferers from these privateers who spared neither friend nor enemy, tried to secure the release of Albrecht in order to put an end to these disorders, and proposed that, as security for his good behaviour, they should themselves occupy Stockholm; but Margaret would listen to nothing before the city was in her power. The failure to reach an agreement infuriated both

ERIC OF POMERANIA

the Hanse and the Prussians and together they threatened to join with Mecklenburg in acts of armed reprisal. Margaret, having given up hope of capturing Stockholm, became more amenable and at Falsterbo in 1395 agreed to release Albrecht for a sum of 60,000 marks which was to be paid within three years. In default of payment he would return to his prison and Stockholm would be delivered to her.

It is a tribute to the unselfishness of Margaret and to her sense of honour that she did not need to be reminded of her promise that, as soon as she had ceased to govern by necessity, she would select an heir to the throne. There could scarcely be any doubt of her selection. Young Albrecht, the nearest heir, whose death occurred at this time, would have in any case forfeited the right because of his acts of enmity towards Denmark. Eric ¹ of Pomerania as the next in succession received the homages of both Sweden and Denmark in 1396 and was crowned in the following year as King of the three northern countries. Margaret thus reached the goal she had patiently pursued for so many years. A common ordinance governing the King's accession to the Swedish and Danish thrones was promulgated. It contained many provisions for the maintenance of public security and the King's peace in both countries. The right of the nobility to build fortified habitations was strictly limited; in Sweden all the fortresses and castles built since Albrecht's accession were to be destroyed. Of greater significance were the provisions guaranteeing the possession of crown lands and the right of the crown to compensation for the losses sustained in the recent disturbed years.

Margaret, however, was no less concerned with the necessity of assuring to posterity the continuance of the Union between the three countries. For this purpose a meeting was convoked at Kalmar on the 1st June 1397. It was in the same place and the same month in which Eric was to be crowned by the Archbishops of Lund and Upsala. Both the noblemen and Margaret seem to have been divided in their opinions on the

¹ Eric was the son of Duke Vartislaw of Stolpe in Pomerania and Maria, a daughter of Margaret's sister Ingeborg and sister to Albrecht the Young.

KALMAR UNION

terms of a closer union. In view of the relative historic importance of the two Acts which were approved by the meeting, it is of interest that only that respecting the Coronation was drawn up in full legal form. The other, with its declaration on the Union, was written on paper instead of on parchment and signed and sealed by only ten out of its seventeen elaborators, and its legality was therefore open to question.

The three Kingdoms [it stated] must be united in perpetuity and enjoy peace under one King. . . . If the King leaves sons, one of them must be proclaimed King of the three Kingdoms: if, on the contrary, he dies without children, the States of the three Kingdoms must elect in concert a common King. Each country must be governed according to its own laws and customs, but is pledged to give assistance to the others in case of war. Persons banished from one of the countries may not be given asylum in the other. The King, in common with his advisers in each Kingdom, has the right to conclude alliances and treaties with foreign powers, and such acts will be regarded as in force in the three Kingdoms.

The future was to justify the doubts that seem to have been present in Margaret's mind as to the lasting efficacy of the Kalmar Union, for it never achieved its full purpose. She was in any case not satisfied with the provision in the Act which laid down that "no law may be taken from one country to the other." On the other hand, she was anxious to avoid any breach with the Swedish negotiators who were the victims of circumstances and must have felt the humiliation of being subordinated to the will of Denmark. They had only wanted her help in order to free themselves from the tyranny of Albrecht and to be themselves the masters of the land. Margaret saw in the Union the means of extending the powers of Denmark in all fields. From the first she must have felt the desirability of using these powers against the Counts of Holstein.

Whether or not Margaret was thinking more of the present than the future she must have been conscious that, however much she profited by the Union to raise Denmark to the foremost place amongst the three Scandinavian countries and however surely she had laid the foundations, Royal power was the only common factor in the Union. So long as she lived, Denmark's policy would remain unaltered. Even after the

RELATIONS WITH FOREIGN POWERS

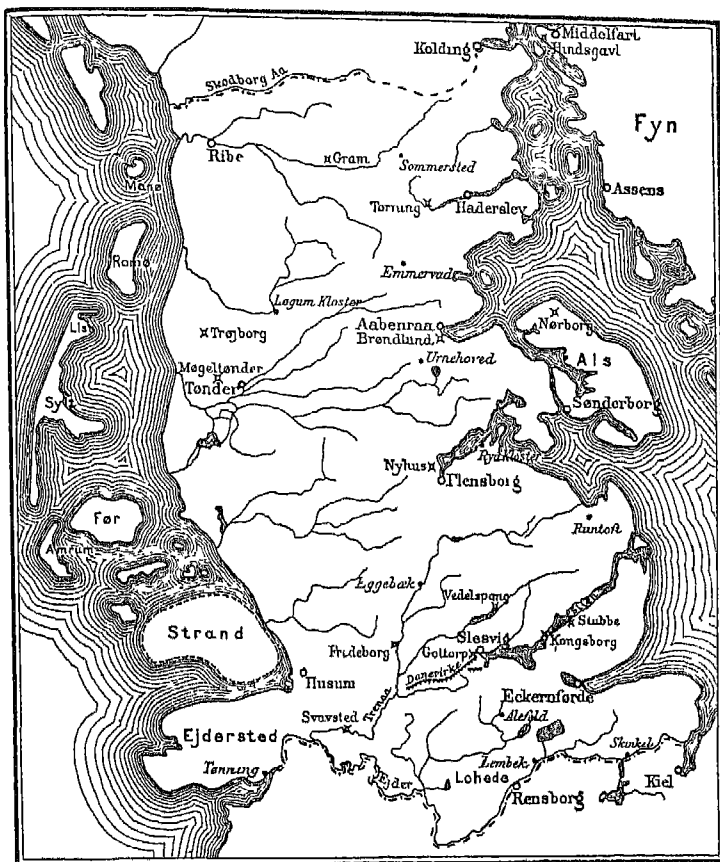
marriage in 1406 of Eric to Philippa, the daughter of Henry IV of England, he still called her his " dear Lady and Mother " and followed her advice in all things. She administered alone through her court officials. The office of Royal Chancellor was held by Peder Lodehat, the Bishop of Roskilde, who was the Queen's personal friend. Margaret ruled everywhere with a firm hand. There could be no evasion of taxes whilst her watchful eye prevented the peasant land-holders from enrolling in the ranks of the nobility or priesthood who paid no taxes. She added immensely to the Crown lands by the rigorous enforcement of the past agreement with the Council of State that all lands taken from the Crown since Valdemar's departure abroad in 1368 and, in Sweden, since the accession of Albrecht of Mecklenburg in 1363, should be restored to it. It is surprising yet true that the Swedish nobility, however deep their reluctance, submitted to the will of the imperious Queen without ever raising a hand. The main prop that supported Margaret in her great work was the loyalty of all religious institutions in Denmark. What a masterly hand took away in the form of church estates and church appointments was returned in the acts of bounteousness she showered on the Bishops, the Churches and the Cloisters. Though she showed the same disposition to the Swedish Church, she never succeeded in winning its sympathy.

In her relations with foreign countries Margaret used her powers with discretion. Henry IV of England vainly attempted to draw her into an alliance against France. Her unvarying respect for the safety of the North German States stood her in good stead when in her last years she was involved in difficulties on the southern frontier. She was chiefly preoccupied with the recovery of the lands which Denmark had lost in her lifetime, South Jutland and Gotland ; the last had been illegally seized by the Prussians in 1398. After many years' negotiations Margaret was able to take possession of Gotland after paying princely sums to Albrecht who claimed ownership and to the persons in occupation.

But South Jutland was of far greater importance to Margaret. It will be recalled that Margaret placed the Counts of Holstein in hereditary possession of Schleswig and Holstein during her

DIFFICULTIES WITH HOLSTEIN

difficulties with Mecklenburg. When Gerard VI died in 1404, he left a widow, Elizabeth of Brunswick, with three small sons. Gerard's brother-in-law, Henry, Bishop of Osnabrück, arrived in Holstein with an armed force to claim



Map of South Jutland.

the guardianship of his nephews. Elizabeth appealed for help to Margaret who readily complied. The eldest of the sons, Henry, was given over to Margaret to be educated at the Danish Court. But a rapid extension of Danish authority over the Duchies met with strong resistance from the Holstein

CONFERENCE OF NYBORG

nobility, who began to assault the Danish representatives. Elizabeth too became alarmed at the wholesale pawning of her estates at the hands of Margaret and went over to her brother-in-law Henry. He forthwith asserted guardianship over her eldest son and called him back from Denmark. In 1410 the nobility of Holstein decided to take up arms. When a year's fighting had brought no material gain to either side, an armistice was declared and negotiations were opened. It had been agreed that all matters at dispute should be settled by arbitration when Margaret was suddenly taken ill. She died on the night of the 28th October 1412.

Though inheriting many of her father's qualities, Margaret possessed greater restraint and a more lovable nature. History will chiefly remember her as the originator of the Kalmar Union. The record of her achievements as Queen and Regent leaves the indelible impression that the Union could only exist if Denmark maintained her superiority and the other kingdoms were kept servile to her domination. "Her death," wrote a Swedish historian, "ended her life but not her fame which will live in perpetuity."

At the time of Margaret's death, the Scandinavian Union was by far the greatest power in the Baltic. The patricians who had dominated the Hanseatic League were swept away by the forces of democracy and the Teutonic Order had not recovered from the crushing defeat of Tannenberg (1410). The way again seemed clear for regaining what Margaret had lost in South Jutland which, to Eric's mind, could only be done by expelling forcibly the Holsteiners. But it was necessary first to repair the ill-feeling aroused in Sweden by Margaret's domineering rule. Immediately after her death he went to Sweden and succeeded in gaining her sympathy through the removal of the most objectionable of her sheriffs and in calling a halt to the seizure of Crown Lands. In accordance with the agreement for the settlement of affairs in South Jutland which was concluded by Margaret shortly before her death, a Court of Arbitration was convoked at Nyborg in 1413 at which Eric himself appeared as prosecutor. To the disappointment of the Holsteiners who considered

INTERVENTION OF EMPEROR SIGISMUND

that the jurisdiction of the Court only covered acts of piracy and breaches of peace, Eric insisted that it had been summoned to settle the whole question of Schleswig's position in Denmark.

The Holsteiners, he abruptly told them, had ever since the death of Gerard VI broken consistently all pledges given to him and his mother. The judgment of the Court as finally pronounced by the Chancellor, Peder Lodehat, was in Denmark's favour: the Dowager Duchess Elizabeth and her children had lost their rights to the Duchy which, according to feudal laws, must be restored to the lawful feudal lord, King Eric. Foreseeing that the verdict could only be executed at the point of the sword, Eric employed a five-years' armistice in fortifying his position in the controlled parts of Schleswig.

War, however, reopened in 1416. Eric had meanwhile gained the sympathy and neutrality of the Hanseatic League which he had aided and abetted in the restoration to Lübeck of the old patriarchal régime. But such victories as Eric won were negated by as many victories on the enemies' side, nor did the coming year bring him any nearer to conclusions. The town of Schleswig was won for Denmark: but the Holsteiners clung tenaciously to the Castle of Gottorp and conquered Tönder. A two-years' armistice was declared and was renewed from time to time, but neither side respected it. At the end of 1422 the outlook for Denmark's position in South Jutland looked very dark: only the East Coast and Flensborg remained in the King's hands.

At the moment when everything seemed to be turning against the King, there was a sudden swing round. Eric's cousin, the Emperor Sigismund, was fighting for his life against the Hussites in Bohemia and his only salvation lay in rallying round him the Electoral Princes of Germany. When this end was achieved at a meeting in Nürnberg, Prince Heinrich Rumpold of Silesia was sent to Lübeck to establish peaceful relations with North Germany. In the Wendish States there had always been a party that desired a closer connection with Denmark in the belief that it would benefit their trade. For this reason Rumpold proceeded himself to South Jutland in 1423 where he succeeded in ending hostilities between the King and his opponents. Though both parties agreed to abide by

SCHLESWIG RECOGNISED AS DANISH

Rumpold's judgment on their respective rights, he preferred to leave the final decision to the Emperor. Meanwhile Eric considered it expedient to form alliances with Pomerania and with the Teutonic Order. At the same moment Sigismund was despatching eminent jurists to Denmark to study all aspects of the South Jutland question. On their return to the Imperial Court all was ready for the great lawsuit that was to decide the constitutional position of the Duchy. The Danish views that the rights of Holstein in South Jutland had their sole justification in the forcible seizure of the land after the death of Valdemar Atterdag and that South Jutland was no fief in the European sense were upheld by the Emperor. On the 28th June 1424, Sigismund gave his decision that the Duchy of Schleswig together with Frisia directly belonged to King Eric and the Danish Kingdom and that the counts had no feudal rights to these lands. Eric greeted the decision as the greatest event in his life and celebrated it by going on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem dressed as a servant.

In the administration of his lands Eric followed in essentials the lead of Margaret though there was to be found in him little of her subtleness and human understanding. He governed with the help of his Court officials of which Eric Krummedige was the most influential. Unlike Valdemar Atterdag and to a certain extent Margaret, he had no affection for foreign and official advisers. The Danish nobility enjoyed his full confidence and loyally supported his policy. Germans no longer invaded the country and Eric appears to have been frugal in adding to the numbers of the nobility. Though no coward, he never led an army in war, but, in negotiating with his adversaries, he would fight for his principles with a ferocity that was ill-becoming to his dignity and did not ease his relations with the Hanse.

Towards the Clergy he showed less sympathy than Margaret. In patronising the Church he followed his own inclinations as in the bringing to Denmark of two new monastic orders, the Carmelites and the Carthusians. As proof of his wide interest in the promotion of education, he received the permission of the Pope to build a University with the proviso that it should not teach theology. Like his predecessors, he took care to

WAR WITH THE HANSE

preserve the friendship of the Pope which stood him in good stead in the appointments of Bishops. He watched with an interested eye the growing activities of the Danish merchant towns of which Copenhagen took the lead in commerce. Until this period the trade of Denmark had been practically monopolised by the Hanse; now with the help of Eric the Danish merchants of the towns obtained the sole right to conduct business. Peasants were compelled to bring their produce to the towns and there sell it to the local merchants in the market place. This new ordinance cut at the root of the Hanse's activities in the interior trade of Denmark, with the result that trade ceased between the Hanseatic towns and the Danish ports. In his anxiety to defend the Danish merchant against the Hanse, Eric had overlooked the value of preserving intact the recent alliance with it against Holstein. They were none the more pleased when Eric threatened to levy dues on all ships passing through the Sound. This was the beginning of the Sound dues, though some years passed before they could be put into execution. With a perspicacious eye on the importance of the Sound for Danish trade, he surrounded Malmö with a wall and, on the side of Zealand, built the castle of Kronen where Kronborg now stands.

On his return from his pilgrimage in 1425 Eric began to carry out the plans secretly prepared with Sigismund for the overthrow of the Elector Frederick I of Brandenburg and the Counts of Holstein. He had, however, reckoned wrongly on the support of the Hanse. His relations, the Pomeranian Dukes, though they were at first successful in ousting the Elector from Brandenburg, were unable to maintain a foothold and Eric met with a like misfortune in losing the city of Schleswig. The Hanse seized the opportunity to exercise control over the Sound and so dictate peace. The results did not justify their hopes. Their fleet could make no headway against the fortified castles overlooking the Strait and when, at the behest of the Holsteiners, it anchored in Flensburg Fjord and besieged the city, Henry of Holstein was killed during an onslaught. Eric had meanwhile blocked the passage through the Sound and the Hanseatic fleet, returning northward, was intercepted and beaten by a powerful Danish fleet. Many of the Ham-

DISCONTENT IN SWEDEN

burger ships ran aground and, a few hours after the battle, a Lübeckese fleet, while sailing through the Sound, also fell into Danish hands. No greater fortune followed the renewal of the attacks on Copenhagen in the following year. Danish control of the Sound was no more challenged and the Sound dues were at last an established fact.

But, whilst Eric was employing all his forces against the Hanse, the Holsteiners were not remaining inactive. Though weakened as a maritime power, the Hanse decided to make South Jutland their next point of attack by providing Holstein with troops. Their capture of Flensburg in the year 1431 curbed Eric's aspirations to win back South Jutland to Denmark. The monarch of three kingdoms had been overpowered by the small Counts of Holstein for the simple reason that they were his superiors in military technique.

It speaks little for Eric's statesmanship that he consistently ignored the necessity of consolidating the ties that bound Sweden and Denmark in the Kalmar Union. The Union had only been made possible by the forceful personality of Margaret, her frequent visits to Sweden and the inner misfortunes of the Swedes. Eric neither possessed Margaret's personality nor did he, apart from a single visit after her death, pay any personal attentions to that country. It was Queen Philippa, and not Eric, who travelled again and again to Sweden to enlist her sympathy and support in days of adversity. The misfortunes of the Swedes were now of a different order though they must be imputed partly to Margaret. Practically the only links between the two countries were the large number of Danes who occupied the higher offices of State in Sweden and the Danish flag under which the Swedes fought. It was not so much the occupation by Danes of high administrative posts that contributed to the growing feelings of discontent with Danish rule, as the extravagant use made by Denmark of the clause in the Treaty of Union which compelled each country to come to the assistance of the other in time of war. Wars lasted from year to year without giving any compensating advantages. In 1429 the Swedes were saying: "We mean peace and we will have peace."

It needed only one person to ignite the flames of discontent

SWEDISH REVOLT UNDER ENGELBRECHT

and that person was Jens Erikson, a Jute by birth. He was the King's administrator in the northern province of Vestmanland. According to tradition, he robbed the peasants of their cattle and horses, and forced women in labour to carry heavy burdens until they succumbed beneath the weight. On one occasion he is said to have ordered five peasants to be hung up and smoked to death over an oven. From this gruesome spectacle we must turn to Engelbrecht Engelbrechtson, a mine-owner of the province of Dalarne, who was determined to put an end to these atrocities. He stood socially somewhere between the noble and the peasant. As the King refused his appeal to bring Jens Eriksön to justice, the Swedish Council, in the hope of preventing an uprising, dismissed him on their own initiative. But the report soon spread that the King was sending to the province one worse than Eriksön, which was sufficient to provoke a revolt that spread through all parts of Sweden in 1435. Before a month was over Engelbrecht and many thousands of peasants stood before Stockholm. On the advice of the wise and popular Governor, Hans Kröpelin, Engelbrecht moved out to Vadstena where the Swedish Council was assembled. By a display of force he made its members sign a letter to the King disowning their loyalty to the Danish crown. In a short time the whole country was in Engelbrecht's hands. Jens Eriksön was discovered hiding in the Cloister of Vadstena and promptly executed.

Men of influence in Sweden were beginning to fear the rising power of Engelbrecht and declared themselves ready to respect the Union if Eric would agree to the settlement of all controversial matters by four arbitrators from each country. Ignoring this proposal, Engelbrecht declared himself before a Parliament at Arboga the leader of the country. The Swedish Council, in a meeting at Halsted, made one more attempt to save the Union. It agreed to respect Eric as the lawful King if he would undertake to preserve the rights and privileges of the Swedish people. This new affirmation of loyalty on the part of Sweden enabled Eric to make a favourable peace with the Hanse and Holstein. His royal rights in South Jutland were preserved and the Hanse regained many of their privileges, though they were still subjected to the Sound dues.

END OF ENGELBRECHT

The King had it then in his power to retain his position in Sweden if he could only see the wisdom of meeting the demands of her Council, which were strictly in accordance with the principles of self-government for each State as acknowledged in the Treaty of Kalmar. Eric, however, could not bring himself to play what he considered a minor rôle in the North and no sooner acceded to the Swedish demands than he proceeded to break his word. There followed an ultimatum from Sweden. Eric was told that, unless he carried out his promises within a month, he would no longer be recognised as King. At the same time the Swedish aristocracy, under the leadership of the ambitious Karl Knutson Bonde, was bearing down on Engelbrecht. The hand of an assassin ended his life in 1436. Taken sick while leading his army against Aksevall, he retraced his steps towards Stockholm. While resting en route, Engelbrecht was brutally murdered by the son of a jealous aristocrat who bore him a personal grudge.

Engelbrecht was one of the most remarkable men in Swedish history. In the short span of three years he raised the peasant class to a social status and to class consciousness. He had shown to the nation what the peasants could do if given a lead. Henceforth the breath of the countryside meant more to Sweden than it had ever before. "The slumbering spirit of nationalism was awakened and the struggle for freedom brought unity to the Swedish people in the hitherto separated provinces and to the contending classes."

Now that Engelbrecht had disappeared from the scene and there was no one who could adequately fill his place, the Swedish Council of State could direct its policy with greater certainty. The power of the peasants was momentarily shattered, Parliaments ceased to meet and the fate of the country was left to a narrow circle of noblemen. In their own interest they agreed to adhere to the Union provided that Sweden preserved her interior independence. Peace and security would also gain by the maintenance of the Alliance with the two other kingdoms, and all three countries had a common aristocratic link. But there was another factor and an important one which could not be ignored. Now that the common people had come to realise their strength, the nobles

ERIC LEAVES THE COUNTRY

had ample reason to fear that a Swedish leader might any time seek support from that quarter. If the King held aloof and showed himself as little as possible in the country, they, the nobility would have it all their own way.

In Denmark also there was much discontent with Eric's government. The Council of State upbraided him for the negative results of his foreign policy as exhibited in his fights with the Holsteiners and his vacillating attitude towards the Hanseatic League, and it strongly advised him to accept the outstretched hand of the Swedes. Eric finally agreed to abide by the decision of a conference at Kalmar, which was held in the summer of 1436. It was there demanded on every side that the recognition of the equal rights of each State as laid down in the Treaty of Kalmar should be rigorously upheld. Eric remained obdurate and only when he realised that he stood completely alone and was deserted by his own nobility did he surrender. As a pure formality the Swedish lords bent their knees in submission to the King and craved his Royal mercy. In reality it was Eric who was the humbled party. He left the Kalmar meeting an aggrieved and beaten man. When, as a final blow, the Danish Council of State refused to give its consent to the nomination of Eric's cousin, Bogislaus of Pomerania, as the successor to the throne, the King left Denmark in anger and took up his residence in Gotland.

At a meeting of the Council at Lübeck in 1439, Duke Christopher of Bavaria, Eric's nephew, was declared Regent and immediately afterwards the Council renounced homage to Eric. To restore peace in South Jutland, Count Adolph VIII of Holstein was granted Schleswig as a free and hereditary fief. Eric spent his next ten years at Visborg Castle organising free-booting expeditions against the Swedes. When the castle was besieged by the Swedes in 1449, he surrendered it to a Danish fleet commanded by Oluf Akselsen Thott and retired to his former home in Pomerania, Rügenwalde Castle, where he died ten years later. When his good and popular Queen Philippa had died in 1430, he declined the advice of the Council to marry again and took as his mistress Cecilia, one of the Queen's ladies-in-waiting, who remained with him for the rest of his life.

CHRISTOPHER III

The Council of State decided that not a moment must be wasted in electing Christopher of Bavaria as King. Timely action might nip in the bud any opposition from Norway and Sweden and attempts by Eric, with the help of Philip of Burgundy, to regain his throne. It could not be denied that, in electing Christopher in 1440, Denmark committed a breach of the Kalmar agreement, but she survived successfully the first critical stage. Now that Eric had been deserted by all his friends, the Hanseatic League was induced to sign a still-stand agreement of ten years' duration. On the 14th September 1441, Christopher III was crowned King of Sweden at Upsala with the full blessing of the Church and the same ceremony was performed in Norway and Denmark in the two succeeding years. Karl Knutson, who knew full well that he would never be permitted by the nobility to occupy the Swedish throne, renounced all pretensions in return for the award of many important fiefs, including Finland. *The one obstacle to Christopher's retention of the Swedish throne was thus removed.*

Meanwhile events in North Jutland where the peasants were in open rebellion against the Council of State, whom they held responsible for all their grievances, nearly cost Christopher his throne. Led by a nobleman named Henry Tagesön they stampeded over the countryside south of Limfjord, destroying and burning a number of estates belonging to the Crown and the nobility. The revolt quickly spread to East and West Jutland. On the arrival of Christopher with a large army, the peasants were forced to retreat. After a decisive battle at St. Jörgensbjerg, in which many thousands of peasants were killed, their leaders, including Henry Tagesön, were brutally executed. The question of the tithes was settled to the satisfaction of the Clergy. It was decided that "in accordance with the precepts of the Bible and the laudable example of other countries" each person should pay the full tithe, "to be distributed amongst the priests, the Church and the Bishop."

Through all the years of Christopher's reign the northern nations remained at peace with one another. The hopes of Denmark that the marriage of Christopher to Dorothea of Hohenzollern would produce a son acceptable to all three

END OF PEACEFUL REIGN

kingdoms were disappointed, for the marriage was childless. In his relations with Sweden Christopher showed greater tact and restraint than his royal predecessor. His visits to that country were frequent, and when he was absent, he was always represented by men of Swedish descent. Yet Sweden was no more content with Christopher than with any other Danish monarch during the time of the Union. The Swedes complained not without reason of the passive attitude of the King towards the piratical acts of Eric. Certain it is that Christopher made no serious attempt to drive his uncle out of Gotland.

When scarcely 33 years of age, the good-hearted Christopher died suddenly, on the 6th January 1448, at Helsingborg, and was buried in Roskilde Cathedral.

CHAPTER IX

OWING to Christopher's sudden death, no thought had been given to the choice of a successor, which needed great perspicacity if the Union of the three kingdoms was to be preserved. In ability and good looks Duke Adolph VIII of Holstein could compete with any others who could claim to be of Royal descent; but he disqualified himself from the start by pleading that he was too old at 47 to bear the weight of sovereignty. He was probably more content to enjoy a peaceful residence on his princely estates. He suggested instead his nephew, Christian of Oldenburg, who was related to the Royal Family through Rickiza, Eric Klipping's daughter. Christian was 22 years of age and of fine appearance: he took both the crown and widowed queen, though it seems that Dorothea would have preferred as her second husband Canute Henricksón of the Gyldenstjerne family. Before being proclaimed, King Christian promised to respect the rights of the Council of State to elect a successor after his death as well as their rights in all matters relating to taxation and war and the distribution of fiefs and castles to foreigners. In October 1449 he was crowned at Copenhagen and on the same day celebrated his marriage with Dorothea.

While these events were passing in Denmark, Karl Knutson, unbeknown to the Danish Council of State, left Finland for Stockholm where he was elected king despite the opposition of the powerful Oxenstjernas and the clergy. To the number of grievances Sweden had against Denmark could now be added the act of electing a king without the approval of the three countries. Knutson's first act was to wrest Gotland from King Eric, though it was soon returned to Denmark through the treachery of Magnus Gren, a Swedish nobleman. At the same time Denmark came near to losing the Norwegian crown. The feeling in Norway was undoubtedly strong for a Swedish-

FAILURE OF KARL KNUTSON TO CONQUER NORWAY

Norwegian union and Norway disliked as much as Sweden the idea of having a German king. In February 1449 a few Norwegian councillors led by Aslak Bolt, the Archbishop of Trondhjem, declared in favour of Karl Knutson; but many more councillors were on the side of Christian who was finally elected King of Norway. While Knutson was being crowned at Trondhjem later in the year and pronouncing the election of Christian as illegal, the jealous Swedish nobility turned against him. At a meeting of Danish and Swedish representatives, which was held at Halmstad in 1450 and which was to settle outstanding questions, Karl was compelled "to surrender all claims to Norway and to abandon the name of King." This meeting was given an additional importance in that it reasserted in unmistakable terms the principles of the Kalmar agreement with regard to the succession. It resolved that the Union between the three kingdoms should be re-established under one king and that each should have its own laws and privileges.

It might be expected that Denmark would rest content with the Halmstad agreement and carefully abstain from any action that would destroy the fruits of reconciliation with Sweden. A simple quarrel, however, over Sweden's failure to present Dorothea with her morning gift which was promised her at the time of her wedding to Christopher and consisted of certain properties in Sweden or the payment of 15,000 guilder, was sufficient to revive old grievances and to bring on a war which lasted several years. The Swedish King was the first to put on his armour. Promises of help to Denmark came from Norway and many German princes.

In the beginning of 1452 Karl Knutson led into Scania the largest army, equipped with the finest guns, that had ever crossed the Swedish frontier. While Christian was being prevented by drift-ice in the Sound from coming to the assistance of his subjects, Karl's army was busy visiting the province with fire and murder. Christian's forces were without a doubt the stronger of the two, but not strong enough to force a decision. Raids and counter-raids went on year after year, bringing destruction and no gain to either side. Christian had at least the satisfaction of sitting on a secure throne. Karl Knutson, albeit he had been hoisted to power on the shoulders of the

CHRISTIAN CROWNED KING OF SWEDEN

Swedish populace, had little to offer to them. The nobility, who regarded him as an equal, resented the pomp and vanity with which he adorned his person. His high ambitions outran his gifts as a statesman, which were not equal to the task of crushing all opposition to his rule. It was highly impolitic that Karl, in this tense atmosphere, should choose to make an enemy of the Church. If to this is added the general discontent of the nobility, there could be no wonder that in the end Christian superseded him on the Swedish throne.

It was left to the Archbishop of Upsala, who was secretly in agreement with Christian, to make the first move in the conspiracy to overthrow Karl. The Archbishop presented the challenge in his own Cathedral. In the presence of all his priests, he laid down on the altar his episcopal cross and robes and, seizing his sword, vowed that he would not sheath it before the tyrant had been expelled from the country. Karl fled to Stockholm, but finding that he could not count on the support of its citizens, escaped to Danzig. *Stockholm gave itself up to the Archbishop*, who proceeded to carry out secretly his plan of placing Christian on the vacant throne. Arriving with a large fleet before Stockholm, Christian declared that his one purpose was to render assistance, if it were needed, against the exiled King. In a parliament summoned at Stockholm the Archbishop obtained its approval to the election of the Danish King. At Upsala, on the 3rd July 1457, Christian was crowned King of Sweden after promising to respect the properties of the nobility and to refrain from burdening the country with heavy taxation. So great was the impression created by the new King that his three-year-old son Hans was soon after elected as his successor.

Events in this reign were once more to demonstrate the vital significance to Denmark of her connection with Schleswig and Holstein. So long as Duke Adolph VIII lived and there was nothing to disturb the harmonious relations between him and his uncle, the question of succession remained in abeyance ; but on Adolph's death in 1459 the question was revived in an acute form. The right of succession of Adolph's heirs to Schleswig was not open to question. He died, however, childless and both his brothers had died before him. As a keen Schleswig-Holsteiner, Adolph had desired that Schleswig should be united

HISTORICAL POSITION OF HOLSTEIN

to Holstein. Also there existed the old promise made in 1326 that South Jutland should never be united to Denmark under one and the same person. In the many peaceful years that preceded his death Adolph was carefully preparing for the future by implanting the German element in this old Danish province. The use of *platt-deutsch* was spreading to all the towns although the spoken language both in country and town was overwhelmingly Danish. By the fourteenth century the nobility of Holstein had without any difficulty supplanted the small nobility who were of no political importance. Holsteiners were to be seen in all the castles and large estates and all the high ecclesiastical offices in Schleswig were held by German noblemen.

The historical position of Holstein was of a different order. It was originally a fief of the Dukes of Saxony, but since the beginning of the fourteenth century no Holstein count had sought enfeoffment and yet the land had passed unchallenged from one line to the other. Only a small part of the land, the Pinneberg, had been transferred to the third line of the Schauenburg family. The question of feudal rights was to be revived by Sigismund. When the leading branch of the Saxon Ducal House became extinct in 1422 with the Saxe-Wittenberg line, Sigismund bestowed it on the Margrave Frederick of Meissen, but the feudal connection with Holstein was not mentioned and, when the Saxe-Lauenburg line applied for it, Sigismund refused the right and gave it expressly to the Bishop of Lubeck. Probably the Counts of Holstein could see little objection to receiving the fief at the hands of a Bishop whose election largely depended on them. On Adolph's death the position was alive with complexities. In the choice of his successor the nobility of Schleswig favoured Christian and in Holstein many of the nobility leaned towards Otto of Schauenburg who was the rightful heir on the male side and, moreover, had the support of Lübeck and Hamburg. The acceptance of Otto would have wrecked the project of a union between Schleswig and Holstein because to Schleswig he had no claim. When the demands of Schauenburg were shelved by the nobility of Holstein, it seemed that they had already decided who should be their prince.

All doubts were set at rest in a meeting at Ribe in 1460 which was attended by King Christian and the representatives of Holstein. Christian's mind was already made up. "Either I or my brother," he declared, "is the heir to Duke Adolph, or there are no heirs; in the latter case Schleswig returns to the Danish crown." It was obvious to Holstein that Christian's proposal was the only one that would avert bloodshed. It remained to be seen what price would be offered for her acquiescence. After only two days' negotiations Christian was elected by the attendant councillors as Duke of Schleswig, Count of Holstein and Stormarn "not as King of Denmark but for the regard they had for his person." In return Christian gave them a "letter of freedom" which in its general terms was very similar to a Danish capitulation. In it he acknowledged that the election only applied to himself and not to his descendants, but that the successor should be chosen amongst his sons. If he left a son who became King of Denmark, he should only be elected under the condition that he confirmed all the privileges of the land and the assemblies: if he left no son, one of his rightful heirs should be elected. The Prince who was elected should take his fief from his feudal lord. (The feudal connection with Denmark was thus recognised.) No tax might be imposed and no war declared without the sanction of the Council. Each province should have its own laws and administration. To these promises he added the important pronouncement that the States of Holstein and Schleswig should remain "perpetually undivided as one whole" (*dat se bliuen ewich tosammente ungedelt*).

Such was the famous ordinance of 1460 which was to influence the relations of Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein during the next 400 years and could be interpreted at everyone's will. It had at least two great advantages in the eyes of the Holsteiners: the right of election which was the best guarantee that freedom would be preserved, and the cementing of the ties between Holstein and Schleswig. It denoted also a fundamental change in the traditional policy of Holstein, which had always striven to keep Schleswig clear from any binding connection with Denmark. The contemporary age regarded the agreement of Ribe as a victory for Denmark. Posterity was of the opposite

WAR WITH SWEDEN

opinion and censured Christian for not availing himself of his right as feudal lord to incorporate Schleswig in Denmark. But it is practically certain that the choice of the latter alternative, which would have severed a hundred years' connection between Schleswig and Holstein, would have placed Christian in the same position as Eric of Pomerania of having at one time to preserve Sweden and conquer Schleswig. The most disquieting feature of the agreement was the financial embarrassments it placed on Christian for the rest of his reign. Peace with his brothers, Maurice and Gerard, and with the disgruntled Otto of Schauenburg, had to be bought at a high price. Christian was compelled to pawn most of the castles in the Duchies to the Holstein nobility and ended by pawning both Schleswig and Holstein to Gerard. The King was finally to lose all patience with Gerard, particularly on account of his many piratical inroads on the Duchies, and expelled him from the country.

Christian I now ruled over all the northern countries from the North Sea to the frontiers of Russia. The dissolution of this large empire was to come earlier than expected. It is surprising that Danish kings had not yet realised the impossibility of holding together so many incongruous parts under one head. Taxes were weighing heavily on the Swedish populace who knew that most of the proceeds went into the pockets of the Holsteiners. The Swedes called the King an "empty purse." The discontent of the people might have been allayed if Christian had not committed the cardinal error of imprisoning his most loyal supporter in Sweden, the Archbishop Bengtson, because, during his absence in Finland, Bengtson had considered it judicious to relieve the people on his own initiative of the more burdensome taxes. When Christian later summoned the Archbishop to surrender Stockholm Castle, the indignant prelate replied: "If I give up my castle, then will King Christian be before Martinmas without the Swedish Kingdom." The ill-treatment of the Archbishop was the signal for a revolt which opened at the beginning of 1464.

In April of that year Christian hastened to Stockholm with a large army. Advancing to the north of the city, he stumbled against a host of peasants at Haraker (Vestmanland) and was severely beaten. Karl Knutson again became King, but, when

STEN STURE

the Archbishop was released after a reconciliation with King Christian and returned from Denmark, the picture again changed. With the help of the Swedish nobility, Christian succeeded in removing Karl Knutson to his former abode, Finland. Here the exile spent his next years in such distress that he complained at one moment of having to pay a debt of 50 marks. Yet Christian was not invited to accept the throne and Sweden for a time enjoyed the leadership of a President of State, Kettil Karlsson Vasa, the Archbishop's cousin. Before two years had passed, another Swedish ruler, Eric Akselsen Thott, betrayed Christian's confidence by recalling Karl Knutson to the throne, on which he remained until his death in 1470. On his death-bed he wisely dictated that Sten Sture, his nephew, should be his successor. Following the dictum that one could at that time be anything in Sweden but a king, Sten Sture was content with the title of a President of State.

In Sten Sture Sweden possessed a leader who was a born commander of armies and, as a statesman, stood head and shoulders above his fellow-noblemen. Christian must either have ignored or have chosen to ignore these high qualities when he decided to profit by Knutson's death to make another attempt to capture the Swedish throne. He chose the moment when there was peace inside Denmark and Gerard had been brought to submission. As he had lost all faith in the accomplishment of his ends by negotiation, he sent out orders to all his bishops and bailiffs to assemble at Copenhagen with their well-armed servants and with sufficient provisions to last six months. The Scanians remained at home to defend the frontier, and the King went to Holstein to obtain money and help. With a fleet of seventy ships and with a fair-sized army he arrived before Stockholm in July 1471. Although he possessed the larger force, he failed to take the city by storm.

At the beginning of October Sten Sture was in command of an army of 10,000 men and with it he marched on Stockholm. At Brunkebjerg, now a part of the city, the Swedish army was twice repulsed by Christian's forces, but a third assault was repulsed by a sortie of the Stockholm garrison, who attacked the Danes in the rear. When Christian, who fought with the greatest bravery, was wounded by an arrow, the flight became

BATTLE OF BRUNKEBJERG

general. The Swedes cut the rope-bridge that connected with the Danish fleet and many of the Danes were drowned. Brunkebjerg was the biggest battle since the defeat of Albrecht of Mecklenburg and had just as important results. With it vanished Christian's last hope of regaining the Swedish crown. Though nothing suited his nature better than to avenge a defeat, Denmark was in no mood to return to the attack. Denmark and Sweden remained at peace for a generation.

The loss of Sweden did not, however, lessen the importance of Denmark in European eyes, and, in the remaining period of Christian's reign, Denmark was never in closer touch with the affairs of Western Europe. In these years the maltreatment meted out to the inhabitants of Iceland¹ by English ships visiting her shores forfeited England the right to continue trading with the island. Denmark complained that Scotland had neglected for many years to pay the yearly quit-rent which she had promised in 1266 to Norway for the surrender of the Hebrides and the Isle of Man. After the marriage of James III of Scotland to Margaret, Christian's only daughter, the debt was cancelled and Margaret in addition was given a dowry of 60,000 guilder, of which 10,000 should be paid forthwith and the remainder by mortgaging the Orkneys and Shetlands. When the marriage took place in Edinburgh, the King could only produce 2,000 guilder; the rest was never paid and the islands were consequently never redeemed. On this account these islands became the perquisite of the Scottish throne.

Christian's family connections, which had come to him through his marriage to Dorothea, played no small rôle in his foreign policy. The Hohenzollerns possessed great territories, both in the North and South of Germany. Dorothea's elder sister Barbara was married to Lodovico Gonzaga of Mantua and one of their sons was made a Cardinal by the Pope. It was through her father's brother, Albrecht Achilles, that Denmark was drawn into the politics of the Empire. In the year 1473 Germany was threatened on one side by the steadily advancing Turks and on the other by the ambitious plans of Charles the

¹ Norwegian Sovereignty over Iceland under a treaty of Union of 1262-1264 was transferred to Denmark in 1380 when Oluf became King of Denmark.

CHRISTIAN'S FOREIGN JOURNEY

Bold of Burgundy. Scorning no new alliances, the Roman Emperor, Frederick III,¹ was easily persuaded by Albrecht Achilles to make overtures to Christian. As a reward for his promised services, the King found himself enfeoffed with the Ditmarschen, which had not been subjugated by the Holsteiners.

It was probably these big political connections that were responsible for Christian's journey to foreign countries in 1474. The splendour and size of the Royal equipage gave it more the character of a chivalrous expedition than of a pilgrimage. At Rotenburg in the presence of the Emperor and Albrecht Achilles, Christian was solemnly invested with the Ditmarschen, Holstein and Stormarn. Holstein was at the same time raised to an hereditary duchy. From Rotenburg he continued his stately progress through Augsburg and Innsbruck. Having successfully crossed the Alps to Brescia, he was fêted by Bartolomeo Colleoni in his castle of Malpaga. To Rome he had already been bidden welcome by the Pope, and on his arrival at the Porto del Popolo he was received by the Holy College, and the nobility of the city. "A fine beast if he could only talk Latin," are the Papal words said to have been applied to Christian in the presence of the Cardinals. Having received many favours, such as the presentation of the Golden Rose, Christian returned to Denmark, after an absence of seven months. This, however, was not his last journey. Two months after his return from Rome, he left for the Rhine to act as mediator between Charles the Bold and the Emperor Frederick III. Neither on this or on any other occasion did Christian achieve any success in the rôle of mediator. His expensive journeys exhausted his means and he borrowed money in every town. Many of the Dutch towns seized the occasion to free themselves from the payment of the Sound dues.

Christian's last years were mainly devoted to the betterment of trade conditions in the country. Foreign merchants were not allowed in Denmark during the winter months and all German companies in the towns were dissolved. Although Christian could not afford an open rupture with the Hanseatic towns, he tried nevertheless to diminish their influence by concluding treaties of commerce with France, England, Scot-

¹ As German King he was Frederick IV.

SOCIAL CHANGES

land, Burgundy and the Netherlands. Towards the end of 1480 the King's health began to give way, and on 21st May 1481 an eventful life was brought to an end. He left the reputation of a pious and brave man. The statesmanlike qualities he exhibited in the first years of his reign were due to the beneficent influence of his uncle, Adolph of Holstein. His weakest points as a ruler were his personal extravagance, his imprudent policy in sacrificing Schleswig in order to gain Holstein and his unwise attempts to subdue Sweden by force of arms, instead of waiting patiently for the renewal of the Union in the spirit of the Halmstad agreement of 1450.

In the last 100 years of the Middle Ages Denmark grew into a social organism composed of two parts : above, the King and the privileged classes of the nobility and clergy, and below, the working classes or peasants and townsmen. The peasant class had lost its political influence and was no longer the mainstay of the armed forces. In the century after Valdemar the Victorious the system of land ownership underwent a complete change. Most of the property-owning peasants became tenants of the Crown, the clergy or the nobility, or the more prosperous slipped into the ranks of the upper classes in order to avoid taxation. The greater part of the lands that previously belonged to the peasants was joined to the estates of the Church. The Bishop of Roskilde, who owned greater territory than the Archbishop himself, possessed a fourth of the estates in Zealand. The nobility probably owned nearly as much land as the clergy, but it was more split up. As the size of the estates increased, the number of the nobility decreased. In times of uncertainty it was no particular hardship for the small proprietors to place themselves under the protection of the landowners, particularly when it rendered them immune from the payment of taxes to the Crown and from other public burdens. Though they had lost their independence, they were left free to cultivate their farms and the only practical difference between the past and the present was their obligation to pay an annual ground-rent to the landlord. It was also in the interest of the landlords to protect their tenants from outside oppression.

Despite many changes in the conditions of ownership which

THE PEASANTS AND THE NOBILITY

separated peasants from proprietors, all classes of the peasants held together, and it would be a mistake to say that they were oppressed and under-driven. The peasants' revolt in the time of Eric of Pomerania had shown that they could be sufficiently dangerous. At the end of the Middle Ages they were as a whole a contented class. Politically they had no voice and economically they depended on the upper classes. Peace could always be preserved so long as landowners and peasants continued to live happily together, and the peasants were protected by the laws which were now administered by kings, and not by the Landstings. It was not until the fifteenth century that the pernicious system of bond service sprang up all of a sudden in Zealand, Falster and Møen. It was the result of the migration of agricultural labour to the towns and of the inability of the peasants to defend their rights. It meant briefly that the sons of a leasehold farmer were forced to take over a farm on the landlord's estate. The direct motive was to bind the farmer to his farm. As many of the sons had farms on other estates, the bartering of one human being for another became a common practice.

The earliest nobility in Denmark were the well-to-do peasants who in return for special privileges had to submit to a strict military service. The German name *adel* first came into use in Denmark at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The Danish nobility was thrown completely into the shade when the German nobility began to spread over South Jutland. Valdemar Atterdag brought in many of the German nobility from Mecklenburg and Pomerania, and Queen Margaret had also many Germans in her service. The new invaders also made themselves conspicuous in Fünen and in the islands to the south of Zealand. Among them one finds the familiar names of Brokkenhus, Hvitfeld (originally Hogenskild), Moltke and Rantzau. From the end of Eric's reign and under his immediate successors, the numbers of the German nobility steadily declined, but this applied to the nobility as a whole. There were many reasons why noble families died out more quickly than was the case with other classes. Family feuds and the participation in wars played an important part, and it was a fact that very many of the smaller and poorer nobility entered

CONSERVATISM OF CHURCH

the service of the Church and therefore did not leave heirs. Yet, in spite of this, the nobles in Denmark were far more numerous at the end of the Middle Ages than at a later period. In 1580 there were no less than 250 noble families, more than double the number that existed immediately before the introduction of absolute monarchy. The majority consisted of a new nobility whose titles rested on the easily gained favours of the kings. This does not mean that they could not rise to the highest offices of State, though such cases were few and far between. In many cases the nobles owed their rank to their merits. With the exception of the rising of the Jutish nobility against Valdemar Atterdag, the nobility were loyal to King and country, whether fighting against Holstein or Sweden. Loyalty was indeed enforced on them by the might of kings. What commands most attention during this long period is the struggle for power between the kings and the nobility. To curtail the powers of the nobility, Valdemar Atterdag set up a central administration under a Council of State with himself as leader, and many of the former offices, formerly filled by the nobility, were left vacant. Subject to the control of the Council were the bailiffs or Crown officials who administered the Royal estates and were expected to defend the Royal castles in time of war. As a further means of weakening the power of the nobility, the meetings of the *Danehof*,¹ which represented the highest order, were rarely summoned during these reigns.

In the period under review, it is difficult to discern any signs of covert or open rebellion against the worldly power of the Church. It escaped any fundamental changes. Catholicism was so strongly ingrained in all parts of the population that the Church had it all its own way. The assumed or genuine piety of kings and queens and the undisputed power over the Church exercised by the King with the sanction of the Pope, whose intervention was merely a means of assuring to himself large contributions, formed a solid background. Religious fervour showed itself in the construction of more churches than the people needed, and the monastic orders set an even higher example. Religious life moved most powerfully under the influence of the mendicant friars. The Franciscans and the

¹ The later term for "hof" (*parlamentum generale*).

THE SURFACE OF DENMARK

Carmelites were the most favoured by successive kings. The discipline of the Church was rigid in the extreme. Not to hear mass on Sundays was regarded as a very serious offence. The services were almost entirely liturgic; only the Psalms and prayers were read in Latin. Attendance at church increased greatly with the granting of indulgences which were promised to all. Rich men were not content with a weekly mass and demanded it every day of the week. Eric of Pomerania went one step further in ordering that, in memory of his dear Queen Philippa, the psalms should be recited night and day in the principal churches.

It may be doubted whether the Church would have succeeded in retaining peacefully its large estates and riches if it had not admitted the members of the nobility to its highest orders. The papal archives prove that applicants to these orders had to be men of noble birth both on the father's and the mother's side. One reads of a young nobleman who at the age of 16 was made *Dean in Odense of which he was made Bishop in his early twenties*. It is no wonder that Bishops were amongst the most worldly men of the times. Though no longer taking part in wars, they furnished large military contingents and took an active part in government. The worldliness of their outlook made them indifferent to their ecclesiastical duties. Throughout the whole of the fifteenth century only one Bishop's meeting was held in Denmark. At the end of this period the Church did not stand so strong as it outwardly appeared. It felt itself that danger was in the air but could not tell from which source it would come, the nobility or the Royal power.

In those days the surface of the land presented a very different picture than in present times, especially in its wide extent of forests, which not only supplied a natural barrier between Scania and Sweden, but also covered much of the heather lands now to be seen in Jutland. Also the land under culture presented a very different appearance. Generally the tracts of cultivated land formed a circle round an open place where stood the church. In good times when agriculture was paying its way, the towns also benefited therefrom. Nearly all the wars were fought outside the Danish frontiers and no particular harm was caused to agriculture by the plunderings of the

GOVERNMENT

Holstein Counts or by the Hanseatic attacks on the coasts. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the central point of Danish trade was the Scanian market, where herrings were exchanged for the industrial wares of Western Europe. In the last phase of the Middle Ages the Scanian market temporarily lost its importance when fish took to other waters and the Flemish herring became a competitor in European markets. Then Copenhagen and Malmö became the chief commercial centres and the most populated towns. Not only herrings but corn, cattle and horses entered the foreign market. Trade increased greatly, though it was conducted by foreigners. The peasant benefited from the fact that his rent to his landlord could never be changed however much the land was improved.

In constitutional matters Denmark differed from most other European countries with their hereditary monarchs. Denmark was an elective kingdom and not an inherited land, though it meant little in practice. The Council of State which represented the people was not elected by them but by the King, and the kings, though nominally elected, based their claims to succession on hereditary rights and acted as absolute monarchs over land and people. The King's duties were clearly expressed in the oath given at the time of his election or coronation. He promised to respect the Holy Church and all who lived in his kingdom and to preserve for them peace, law and justice and all the freedoms, rights and privileges "which have been given by our forefathers, the Kings of Denmark."

The share of the nation in the affairs of government had long been effaced by the influence of the nobility. Matters which were ordinarily laid before the three large provincial Assemblies (*Landsting*) were now decided at meetings which represented the land as a whole. The King's councillors were in reality the King's advisers. The authority that they exercised over the King was due in no small measure to the fact that they stood together with the other leading men in the country, to whose ranks they belonged. Great as their power was, the King's name carried with it authority and respect. In practice all matters of government were decided by him in person. He would listen to the advice of his Council but, as its members were spread all over the country, their meetings were only held

THE KING AND THE NOBILITY

at rare intervals when the King felt constrained to consult them on important decisions. Thus the kings could allow themselves a large freedom of action though the King and his councillors found it in their mutual interest to work together in harmony. When their interests and their views conflicted, as frequently happened, the kings usually had the final word.

BOOK II
THE ERA OF THE NOBILITY

CHAPTER X

AT the death of Christian I, the power of royalty was stronger than it had ever been.

The Council of State deemed it wise to postpone the election to the throne of Christian's eldest son Hans until the approval of all the neighbouring countries had been obtained : Sweden, Norway and the Duchies. Of these Sweden proved to be the most amenable and within a few months agreed to a single monarch for all three kingdoms. With Norway it was less easy. With the help of the Archbishop of Trondhjem, Sten Sture had formed a party which threatened to oppose by arms the continued incorporation of Norway in the Union. But the Danes were the stronger party and at Halmstad in 1483 Hans was proclaimed King of Norway and Denmark much to the annoyance of Sten Sture. Reconciliation, however, was bought at the price of the King's submission to the wills of the nobility and clergy in both kingdoms. In his capitulation he confirmed all the old rights, above all the freedom to elect bishops without royal intervention. He was forbidden to seek his son's election in his own lifetime. None but a home-born nobleman might sit in the Council : anyone of them that courted the King's favours would be expelled from its membership. Without the consent of the Council, of the nobility and the clergy, no new taxes would be regarded as valid. The nobility were now reinstated in their right to fortify their domains "for their own benefit and that of the State." The Council of State was recognised as the country's highest tribunal. The complete surrender of the King to the nobility was the main argument which induced Sweden to recognise Hans as king. But the conditions attached to recognition were of such a nature that the King was left with little or no power in that country, if he chose to fulfil them.

Denmark's position in the Duchies was bound by the agree-

DIVISION OF THE DUCHIES

ment of Ribe¹ (1460) which left them the right to choose their ruler amongst the sons of a deceased king. In order to appease the imperious ex-Queen Dorothea, who claimed the rights of her younger son, Frederick, to the two provinces, the Ducal *Landdag* nominated both sons at the same time, which was contrary to the agreement. It was infringed still more when Frederick came of age and it was decided to divide the Duchies into two new parts, that of Gottorp and that of Segeberg. In accordance with the German practice which allowed to the younger son the right of choice, Frederick selected Gottorp and was allowed by his brother to exchange it for Segeberg within four years if he so desired. This first division of the Duchies was the forerunner of later divisions which brought many misfortunes to Denmark. But no breadth of magnanimity on the part of Hans could ever satisfy the pretensions of Frederick who claimed half the kingdom of Norway and several Danish islands. A parliament which met at Kalundborg in 1494 made an end to these pretensions by proclaiming the unity of the kingdom but not to the hostile intents of Frederick towards his brother.

Years passed before Hans could assert his acknowledged rights to the Swedish throne. Sten Sture remained obdurate so long as Gotland remained in Danish hands. In those years Sweden's position was particularly difficult. As compared with Denmark, she was a weak power and lived in perpetual fear of a Russian invasion through Finland. She had no settled alliance with any of the Baltic States, and the only power of importance in North Germany was the Hanseatic League who was more interested in maintaining good relations with Denmark. Neither Sweden nor Denmark was in a position to fight, and a real union could only be restored if there could be found a strong and effective union party in Sweden.

After waiting fourteen years for the Crown of Sweden, the King lost patience and decided to enforce his rights by arms. Dorothea, who had always worked for peace, died in 1495 and Sten Sture had at this time fallen foul of the Swedish Council. He had fallen out with its mightiest member, Svante Nilsson Sture, and with the Archbishop Jakob Ulfson. Though deposed by the Council, Sten Sture refused to give up his office

¹ See page 126.

FAILURE TO CONQUER THE DITMARSCHEN

and raised an army of peasants in opposition. At this stage a mixed army of Danish peasants and townsmen and of the wild *lansquenets* from Saxony entered the province of Bleking. The forces of Sten Sture were caught by surprise at Rotebro, north of Stockholm, and completely routed. When the garrison in Stockholm saw the Danish army approaching Brunkebjerg waving the captured flags, they took it for an auxiliary force and, in advancing to greet it, were caught in the trap. Those of the Swedes who were not cut down by the Danish cavalry attempted escape by swimming across the Norrström and Sten Sture only escaped capture by throwing himself into the stream with his horse and slipping through a sally-port into the Castle. Seeing that his cause was lost Sture laid down his office, sent his army home, and recognised Hans as Sweden's king. The warm demonstrations of loyalty and friendship which Hans received on every side were due more than anything to his conciliatory conduct. He was allowed a free hand in appointing his own men to the highest administrative posts ; many of the Swedes were pained by the indulgence with which he treated Sten Sture, whom they would have wished executed.

On his return to Denmark after the pacification of Sweden, Hans made his preparations for the conquest of the Ditmarschen. Though small in size the natural defences of the country and the warlike character of its inhabitants presented redoubtable obstacles to a would-be conqueror. Hans spurned all these restraints in his ambition to bring under his rule the land that had been given to his father by the Emperor. Against an army of 14,000 Danes and Saxons the Ditmarschen could at the most muster a force of 6,000. After the capture of Meldorf by the Danes, the whole land seemed to lie at their feet. The King, with the Duke Frederick and his retainers, quietly withdrew to the local cloister, waiting to see what impression they had made on the enemy by their initial success. When it showed no signs of submitting, the Danish army moved northwards from Meldorf along a narrow marsh flagged on both sides by deep ditches, through which they could make little headway. To add to its misery, the sluices of the dykes were suddenly opened in the middle of the fight. Thousands of men perished and amongst them the flower of the nobility of Holstein and

SWEDISH REBELLION

Lauenburg, one of whom, Hans Ahlefeldt, defended the standard of the Danebrog until he breathed his last. It has never been known how the King managed to escape from the field of battle. Inside three hours the Ditmarschen had destroyed an immensely superior army.

This disaster created a stir in Sweden and inevitably helped to fan the flames of discontent with Danish rule. The leading hand in the coming revolt was Hemming Gad, who for many years had been actively occupied in enlisting the support of the Pope for Sten Sture. He was the first of the Renaissance type to be seen in the northern countries. As a bitter enemy of Denmark, he sought to compose the differences between the two Swedish rivals Sten Sture and Svante Nilsson. Through Sture's influence, Hemming Gad obtained the bishopric of Linköping without asking for the Pope's approval. The cause of the King was as good as lost when the Swedish Council turned against him by electing Sten Sture as President of the State. During eight long months the garrison of Stockholm, defended by Queen Christina, held out against the besieging army of Gad. When an epidemic of scurvy had reduced the garrison of 1,000 to seventy, Christina surrendered under the guarantee of her person. King Hans, who arrived at Stockholm three days after the surrender, was forced to return to Denmark with nothing accomplished. The unfortunate Queen remained another six months in prison before she was conducted to the frontier by Sten Sture in person.

The reason for the King's late appearance at Stockholm and his speedy departure was an insurrection in Norway which had been fomented by the Swedes and was led by Knut Alfson, a Norwegian noble of Swedish descent. With Swedish auxiliaries, he took possession of Akershus and many fortresses in the south of Norway. While laying siege to the fortress of Båhus, which was defended by Henry Krummedige, there arrived the young Prince Christian, who, in his first encounter, displayed so much courage and skill that the revolt was soon suppressed. After driving away the besieging army, he turned on the Swedish fortress of Elfsborg, which offered little resistance. He then forced his way into West Gotland. Henry Krummedige, whose hands were now free, took the offensive and

WAR WITH LÜBECK AND THE PEACE OF MALMÖ

recaptured many of the places which had been seized by Knut Alfson. This person's career came to an abrupt end. While he was negotiating peace with Krummedige, the two fell into a quarrel, and Knut and his men were murdered despite a safe conduct which had been given to them. With the exception of a rebellious outbreak in 1508, which was also suppressed by young Christian, Norway remained quiet for many years.

Sweden was now to suffer the loss of Sten Sture, who died suddenly on his return from the frontier to which he had accompanied Christina. To conceal his death, a man similar in appearance was dressed in his clothes and driven to Stockholm in a closed sledge. This subterfuge gave Hemming Gad time to lay his preparations. Although the popular Svante Nilsson Sture was accepted as President of the State, Gad was the virtual administrator of the country. Having been excommunicated by the Pope for his effrontery in accepting a bishopric without papal sanction, he could never be bishop in name. In view of his unyielding attitude towards Denmark, attempts to settle differences between the two countries by arbitration invariably failed. Even when sudden death removed Svante Nilsson from the political arena, the way to Sweden's throne was again barred by the election in 1512 of Sten Sture the Younger as his father's successor.

It was at this time that the Hanseatic League decided to take vengeance on King Hans for his constant interferences with the freedom of its trade. The climax came when the King concluded a treaty with Henry VII of England. Although the treaty lasted only seven years, it gave Englishmen free trading and fishing rights in Scania and Zealand. They were also allowed to erect their buildings in Bergen, Lund and Landskrona and to establish themselves in all parts of Norway and Denmark. All their former rights in Bergen and other cities were confirmed. War between Denmark and Lübeck was the inevitable consequence and was waged for three years with varying results. The Danish fleet fought for the first time under the two sea-heroes Sören Norby and Otte Rud. The Lübeckese eventually realised that they had nothing to gain by a war that was so damaging to their trade and sea power, and peace was concluded at Malmö in 1512. Their old trade rights were

CHRISTIAN II

restored, but they were forced to sever all commercial relations with Sweden.

At the beginning of 1513 a fall from his horse caused the death of King Hans. He was a man of simple habits and had a strong predilection for everything Danish. He was frequently subject to fits of melancholy, an evil that was to affect still more his son Christian. In the Church of the Grey Friars at Odense he was buried at the side of his wife Christina. When the church was burnt down in 1805, their remains were transferred to St. Canute's Church in the same city.

On the death of King Hans his only surviving son, Christian II, had long since borne the title of rightful heir to the thrones of Denmark, Sweden and Norway. The young Prince had been brought up first in the house of a respectable bourgeois family and then with a Canon of the Church. The already elected heir to the throne was seen standing in the church, candle in hand, singing with the other choirboys. When this came to the ears of the King, however, he was exceedingly angry and took him home. The young Prince, when tired of his Latin lessons, bribed the castle's watchman so that he could run out at night and keep company with other young men. His behaviour became so wild that the citizens of Copenhagen themselves complained to the King. As a form of chastisement, King Hans "read to him a good chapter with word and whip" until the Prince dropped to his knees and begged for pardon.

Christian's pre-election did not make him any the more certain of his throne. He must first win over that "sovereign despot," the Council of State, and gain possession of the castles. His uncle, Duke Frederick of Gottorp, had fortunately the good sense to reject the offer of the throne made to him by a large number of the Jutish nobility. The Lübeckese were waiting to take advantage of any event and only respected their obligations so long as they did not gain greater advantage by breaking them.

When the time came for decisions, Christian was not only faced with the uncertain attitude of the Council, but with the necessity of gratifying the wishes of a large number of common notables who demanded the right to be consulted on the

THE KING "CAPITULATES" TO THE NOBILITY

terms of the royal capitulation. The credentials presented by the Swedish envoys to an Assembly summoned at Copenhagen were so vaguely worded that all decisions were for the moment confined to Norway and Denmark. The Swedish demands, therefore, found no place in the royal capitulation which Christian signed in 1513. It contained many new clauses, which were specially designed to restrict royal power and augment the privileges of the nobility. The King was not allowed to invite the Council to elect one of his sons as heir-presumptive to the throne. No "unfree" man might be ennobled without the Council's approval. Any goods that he left must not go to his "unfree" relatives, but be sold to the nobility. All nobles were entitled to impose the highest legal fines on their peasants and subordinates. The "Kingdom's good men" must give no service to the King without the Council's permission. The members of the Council must be invested with the best fiefs in the kingdom and both nobility and clergy were to preserve their sovereign rights over their own subordinates. The Capitulation ended with the words: "if we take any other advice but that of the Council—which God forbid—then all the inhabitants of the kingdom must help in frustrating it."

By the end of 1513 King Christian was in possession of all his lands save Sweden. As a means of strengthening an unsteady throne, Christian sought to augment his power by forming alliances with the leading countries in Europe. With France and Scotland King Hans had already signed offensive and defensive agreements. In 1516 Christian made similar agreements with Poland, and with the Prussian and Livonian Orders, and with Riga and Danzig. He also felt the need of an understanding with the Royal House of Austria as the power which exercised the greatest influence in European affairs.

Christian, though now in his thirty-second year, had resisted all the attempts of his late father and the Council of State to make him marry. His deep attachment to his mistress Dyveke, a Dutch lady whom he had met at Bergen, was the main impediment. The Council therefore took upon itself the responsibility of finding a wife, and Dyveke's own mother,

Sigbrit, abetted the scheme. The Emperor Maximilian's son, Philip of Austria, had left many daughters, of whom the youngest was Elizabeth, then aged 13. Her brother, the future Emperor Charles V, was still a minor. The first approach must therefore be made through her grandfather. To leave no stone unturned, the King's uncle, the Elector of Saxony, was also drawn into the plan. Three distinguished emissaries, including the Bishop of Schleswig, were sent to take charge of the young Princess and to conclude the final arrangements. The marriage contract was signed at Linz in the presence of the Emperor. A squadron of six vessels, which had been sent out to convey the young Princess to her new home, returned with a seasick passenger. On her first official reception at Hvidøre, whilst the Bishop was making her a flattering speech of welcome delivered in Latin, Elizabeth had so little recovered from her sickness that she had to listen to it from the lap of her lady-in-waiting. Elizabeth—she was called Isabella in the north—was no beauty. She had the thick underlip of the Hapsburgs. It was little wonder, therefore, that the King's love remained with Dyveke, though he always treated Isabella with respect in public.

Though one of the most Danish of Danish Kings who, unlike many of his predecessors, talked and wrote Danish, Christian II often allowed himself to be swayed by foreigners, men and women. Possessed of great intelligence and of a strong will, he might have been one of the greatest of kings but for an highly strung nature and an incurable lust for vengeance. The consequences of his deep devotion to Dyveke reveal this trait in a lurid light. The romance began at Bergen, where she and her mother, Sigbrit were living as Dutch refugees at the time that Christian was Governor of Norway. Though Dyveke was outwardly discarded after Christian's marriage, the relationship did not then cease. It was not until her sudden death in 1517 that the King's innate hatred of the nobility was unmasked. The rumour spread that she had been poisoned by Torben Okse, the feudal lord of Copenhagen Castle. No real suspicions entered the head of Christian until, on the occasion of a Court Ball, he innocently enquired of Torben whether he had ever aspired to the affections of



QUEEN ELIZABETH, WIFE OF CHRISTIAN II

TORBEN OKSE

Dyveke. Torben, though receiving warning glances from onlookers, made the incautious and fatal reply that he had desired her attentions but had never succeeded in obtaining them. This was more than a passionate lover could tolerate. After wrestling with the Council of State, the King had Torben Okse sentenced by a court of peasants and ordered his execution, despite the entreaties of the Queen and the leading ladies of the land who went on their knees to crave mercy. This reckless abuse of their most precious rights wounded deeply the feelings of the nobility which did not lessen when the King, showing a complete unconcern for their susceptibilities, decided to turn to the lower ranks of society for his advisers. Sigbrit's influence increased if anything after Dyveke's death. Three other persons were to play a decisive role in the future: Sigbrit's brother, Herman Willemsson, Didrik Slaghaek, a distinguished member of the Westphalian nobility, and the burgomaster of Malmö, Hans Mikkelsen. It was a democratic party that formed itself around the King in opposition to the nobility.

The only thing that the King and his Council had in common was the desire to renew the connection with Sweden and once more to assert Danish sovereignty over that country. Sten Sture the Younger was not in so strong a position that he could ignore the party led by Eric Trolle, who claimed the Regency after the death of Svante Sture. Being of Danish descent, Trolle was disliked by the younger nobility and by the peasants. To draw swords both with Eric Trolle and the King of Denmark would have exposed Sten Sture the Younger to greater risks than he dared take, and he therefore decided to try and win over his enemies by peaceful means. The first step, and a dangerous one, was the appointment of Gustav Trolle, Eric's son, to the Archbishopric of Upsala. Gustav, however, returned from Rome, where his appointment had been confirmed, with the one idea of setting the Danish King upon the Swedish throne. He had the satisfaction on his return of gaining the support of the majority of the clergy and of the greater part of the nobility. Having refused to render homage as Archbishop to Sten Sture the Younger, he entrenched himself in his fortified castle of Ståke. When

A DIPLOMATIC LEGATE

Eric Trolle was thrown into prison, the last hope of reconciliation between the two parties vanished, and the Archbishop's castle was besieged. The seizure by the Danes of a Swedish ship laden with munitions gave Sture the opportunity to denounce the still-stand agreement between Sweden and Denmark and to declare that he would never accept Christian as King.

War began, but, as neither party was sufficiently armed for it, hostilities were limited to destructive inroads on the frontier provinces. Meanwhile Sture used every effort to cow his opponents before Christian could come to their help. Not even the papal excommunication of him and his followers could make him deviate from his course. A Danish army sent to relieve the Archbishop was thrown back by Gustavus Vasa and the Archbishop was driven by his own people, who feared the consequences of a further resistance, to give himself up to Sture, who removed him to a cloister. His castle was burnt to the ground by revengeful peasants.

Papal influence came again into play, this time to effect a reconciliation between two disputing countries. For this purpose the Pope sent to Denmark a business-minded legate named Arcimbold. The King and the Queen were amongst the first to buy his wares, and the Jutes were relieved of their sins by offerings of cheese and butter. As a further mark of royal favour, the worthy legate was permitted to sell indulgences throughout the whole land. With the King's full approval Arcimbold departed for Sweden to negotiate an armistice. Meantime Christian decided on making another attempt to quash the rebellion in Sweden, but was no more fortunate than in his first attempt. After unsuccessfully engaging the Swedish troops at Stockholm and after fruitless negotiations, he chose the first favourable wind to return with his fleet to Denmark with a number of Swedish hostages taken by deceit. One of them, Hemming Gad, formerly a bitter enemy of Christian, from now on became his faithful servant. No sooner had Christian departed from Stockholm than Arcimbold arrived at Upsala on his errand of peace. Sten Sture was far too wily for the greedy prelate. Besides lavishing upon him costly gifts, Sture offered him the tempting

ESCAPE OF THE LEGATE

bait of the vacant Archbishopric of Upsala. These magnanimous attentions were enough to convince the legate that Sweden was in the right and Denmark in the wrong. As soon as this act of treachery was known, Christian sent orders



Scene of the Seven Years' War.

to all his officials to seize the legate and his party, and all his goods. Arcimbold escaped to Lübeck with the loss of a rich cargo of copper, iron, cheese and butter, which was seized at Elsinore by the Danes and was to have been sold by the impoverished Swedes to Germany.

BATTLE OF FYRISAA

At the beginning of 1520 a large army of Danes, French and Scots assembled in Halland and crossed the Swedish border. Its leader was Otto Krumpen of Trudsholm. On all the doors of the churches was hung the papal interdict to which Sweden had been subjected for her maltreatment of Gustav Trolle. The Swedes were entrenched behind wooden defences near the town of Bogesund. Before the two armies were at close quarters, a well-aimed cannon-ball hit Sten Sture in the thigh and seriously wounded him. His fall shook the hopes and confidence of his men, who took to flight. When the Swedish defences had been broken in the mountains of Tiveden, not without the capture of the French commander, Jacques de la Valle, the Danish army spread over Närke and Vestmanland. Meanwhile the wounded Sten Sture had been taken in a sledge to Stockholm, where he died shortly. The war was to all appearances over when a Swedish Council of State bowed to the inevitable and offered to pay homage to Christian. But in Stockholm sat Sture's widow, Christina Gyllenstjerna, with her small children. She was determined to defend the city to the last. The Danish army was not strong enough to attack and withdrew to Upsala, whilst the peasants rushed in from all quarters to defend the city. The two armies faced one another on the plain of Fyrisaa in April 1520. In the hour of victory the Swedes were driven back with tremendous losses.

The power of the peasants was by no means crushed when a Danish fleet arrived to invest Stockholm from both sides. Month after month passed before the city opened its gates in September to Christian's army after he had offered an amnesty to Christina and all her friends for the offences committed against himself, his father, King Hans, the Archbishop and other prelates. Christian was crowned on the 4th November in the great church of St. Nikolaj in Stockholm: Danes and Holsteiners bore the Swedish regalia, Otto Krumpen the crown and Sören Norby the sceptre.

During the festivities that followed the coronation, the King, Gustav Trolle and Slaghaek were preparing a barbarous attack on all the living members of Sture's party. The Archbishop wanted the future made safe and Christian desired to

THE STOCKHOLM MASSACRES

escape the dangers to which his father and grandfather had been exposed. The majority of the King's advisers were in favour of putting out of the way those who had been, and might again be, the people's leaders in an insurrection. The festivities over, the greater number of the Swedish notables were summoned to the castle, and the doors closed behind them. The Archbishop in his indictment complained of the outrages that Sture and his followers had inflicted on him in the destruction of his castle and in the treatment of his Church. He demanded compensation and the rebuilding of the castle of Ståke and declared his enemies guilty of heresy. Christina, in the hope of retrieving her honour and proving her innocence, committed the indiscretion of producing the document which removed the Archbishop from his office and which contained the names of the foremost men of Sweden. The King could not ask for more. To give an air of righteousness to his actions, he appointed a committee to pass judgment on the offenders. As the crimes concerned the Church only, the members of the committee belonged solely to the clerical order. They declared the accused heathens after the canon laws of Sweden and of the Empire.

The judgment was much to the King's liking. The doors of the castle were securely locked, trumpets blared forth in the streets and an order proclaimed that every citizen must keep to his home. The executions began with the bishops as etiquette demanded. Then came the turn of the Councillors of State and the Knights, amongst them Eric Johansen, the father of Gustavus Vasa. He declined a proffered pardon. "I will," he said, "in God's name die with my brothers, all honourable men." No less than eighty-two were executed on the first day. The execution of thirteen honest citizens, who were unable to conceal their wrath, ended the day's slaughter. Long did the fallen lie in their own blood. On the third day after the massacres, most of the bodies were burnt as heretics outside the city. To give the final touch to this unholy barbarism, Sten Sture's body was exhumed and thrown on the burning pile. Otto Krumpen and other high officers made no attempt to hide their disgust, and Norby's fleet provided a haven of refuge for every Swede who could escape. Finland,

CHRISTIAN'S REFORMS

also, which was still in the King's hands, was not spared ; many in the country who had held to Sten Sture paid for their loyalty with their lives. The home passage of the Danish army through Sweden was marked by further brutalities. In spite of Christian's firm belief that he had stifled for ever the seeds of opposition in Sweden, the Stockholm massacres dealt the final blow to the Northern Union.

Christian's ungovernable nature ruled his actions as much in Denmark as in foreign parts. Secure in the affection of his people, he violated all precedents in ignoring his Council of State and in humiliating the upper orders of the nobility and clergy. He surrounded himself with men of low birth whom he raised to the highest dignities. Yet it must be admitted that they showed great skill and energy in his service, and Christian's work as a legislator places him in the forefront of enlightened sovereigns. His philanthropic concern for bourgeois and peasant contrasted with his habitual severity. In his ecclesiastical and civil laws he laid the foundations of a new national code : many were the measures he introduced for the safeguarding of morality, order and the administration of justice. Instead of being burnt alive as heretofore, magicians and witches were whipped and expelled from the towns. Lepers, who were numerous in the Middle Ages, were distinguished from other beggars by knocking a stick against a piece of wood. Housewives were enjoined to clean their tables, benches and floors every Saturday and on the eve of feast days. No fêtes were allowed in the country during the summer or at harvest-time. No plaintiffs were allowed to appear in court in a state of drunkenness, to strike or provoke the judges. Those who were too poor to defend themselves were provided with a lawyer. Though not completely successful in his abolition of compulsory labour, Christian restricted it considerably by an ordinance which permitted maltreated peasants to leave one estate for another. Christian's greatest contribution to progress was in the realm of education. In addition to extricating the Latin schools from the pitiful situation into which they had sunk and forcing on them more modern education, he instituted a number of high and primary schools. Priests were expected to instruct children in the

REVOLT AGAINST THE PAPACY

catechism, and reading and writing in the Danish language. The Latin schools still remained the intellectual home for those condemned to serious study. To advance the interests of commerce, the King tried to concentrate all business in the towns. Trading in any form outside the cities was severely punished. Foreign merchant ships were only allowed to enter the port of Copenhagen, a prohibition which hurt most the Lübeckese. The intention was to make Copenhagen the entrepôt for all the Baltic trade and to free the north from a dependence on the Hanse.

Of greater interest perhaps to the student of this reign are Christian's attempts to reform the Catholic Church in his own kingdom. This spirit of reform led him to break completely with Rome in the establishment of a Supreme Tribunal at Roskilde, composed of laical and ecclesiastical members whose judgments did not allow of an appeal to Rome. The abuses in the Church were many and manifest. Many of the clergy preferred a temporal to a spiritual existence. For instance, a Bishop of Ribe who was consecrated at the end of the fifteenth century did not celebrate mass in his cathedral before the fourteenth year of the next century. Such was the ignorance prevalent in most ranks of the clergy that Christian II forbade the ordination of candidates to the priesthood who had not studied in the University of Copenhagen. A further move away from Papacy was the bringing of the monasteries under episcopal jurisdiction. Only two years after Luther made his appearance, the Elector of Saxony, at Christian's request, sent a Wittenburger, Martin Reinhard, to spread the Reformation in Denmark. The wild gesticulations that accompanied his sermons, which were spoken in a language unknown to Denmark, produced an atmosphere of levity, nor did Luther's friend Karlstadt, who succeeded Reinhard, make any greater impression, perhaps because the King had at the time to address his attentions to another quarter. Sweden was then in a state of uproar,

Although to the mind of Christian the surrender of Stockholm had paved the way to a perpetual peace, many restless heads in Sweden were planning, with the help of the people, the overthrow of Danish rule. Gustavus Vasa, Christian's

END OF KALMAR UNION

most dangerous foe, was one of the persons who had been taken to Denmark as hostages two years before. Placed for safe custody with Eric Banner in Jutland, he was there only a year before he escaped to a merchant's home in Lübeck disguised as a cattle-driver. Finding himself an unwanted guest, he slipped on to a merchant ship and landed near Kalmar, the only town besides Stockholm that was still defending itself against the Danes. After a series of miraculous escapes and as many disappointments, he fled to the Norwegian frontier, where he collected a small force of 200 men, which soon grew into an army of several thousand. The men of Dalarne soon rallied to his standard as well as the surrounding provinces and, with an army of 15,000 men, he defeated Didrik Slaghaek in two successive engagements. Within a short time the revolt spread to all parts of Sweden. At a meeting in Vadstena in August 1521 Gustavus was appointed President of the State. King Christian, who received these ill-tidings while he was visiting the Netherlands, decided that he must vent his anger in some direction and chose Didrik Slaghaek as the scapegoat.

If Christian had not yet lost all his hold on Sweden, it was due to the activities of Sören Norby and Henry Slaghaek. Finland and Stockholm did not surrender to Gustavus until 1523. Apparently Christian underestimated the dangers or he would have made a more determined effort to save the Swedish crown. The great difficulties which faced Christian at the moment, the war with Lübeck, the hostile relations with Duke Frederick of Gottorp, and lastly the revolt of his own subjects, prevented him sending a large army. In these circumstances, the whole of the land as well as Bleking surrendered to Gustavus Vasa as King of Sweden.

The Kalmar Union was ended. The Stockholm massacres had shaken the confidence of the Danish nobility in their king, and in Jutland nobles and bishops were deliberately spreading the rumour that the King was coming with his hangmen to stage another "Stockholm banquet." At the back of it all lay Duke Frederick's designs on the Danish crown. Christian, who was beginning to lose heart, wasted time in fruitless negotiations with his rebellious subjects. He

CHRISTIAN LEAVES THE KINGDOM

had still on his side Norway, all the islands, Scania and the great forts of Kalundborg, Malmö and Copenhagen. Yet he returned from Jutland irresolute and disconcerted. A revolt was spreading from Jutland to Fünen, and Lübeck was planning an attack on Copenhagen. Without men and money he left the kingdom, after appointing Henry Göye Governor of Copenhagen.

CHAPTER XI

IN 1523 Duke Frederick received at Viborg the homage of all parts of Jutland : shortly afterwards he was acclaimed as sole Duke of Holstein and Schleswig—it was the day after Christian fled the country. Having taken possession of the island of Fünen, his army of 6,000 men crossed the Great Belt. But months were to pass before Copenhagen and Malmö were to surrender and he could call himself King Frederick I of Denmark. Norway also submitted when the King had recognised the country as a free elective kingdom : in consequence Frederick renounced the title of heir to Norway. The powers of the new King were more fettered than ever. The Church was restored to its former independence and, “ to put an end to heresy,” Luther’s “ disciples or others ” were not permitted to preach against the Pope or the Roman Church. Also merchants were made to feel that a new era had come. Peddlers from Lübeck swarmed over the land like “ flies in autumn.”

Christian II, whom many wished back again, was meanwhile turning to foreign countries in search of help. While Henry VIII of England refused to lend his support, the King and Queen found a sympathetic response from Brunswick and Brandenburg, who furnished him with an army of 30,000 men ; but money ran short and the troops declined to cross the frontier without a month’s advanced pay. In his distress, Christian turned to Luther and his friends and, while in Wittenburg, had the New Testament translated into Danish. He had still a loyal friend in Sören Norby, who, from his hiding-place in Gotland, was menacing Frederick I, Gustavus Vasa and Lübeck. When Visborg could no longer hold out against the besiegers, Norby offered to surrender the island to Frederick on condition that he retained the fief. Much to the consternation of Gustavus Vasa, this and other controversial

CHRISTIAN II TURNS TO NORWAY

matters between Denmark and Sweden were settled in favour of the former through the mediation of Lübeck in 1524. Denmark was to retain Gotland and Bleking if Norby was transferred to another fief. But Norby remained where he was and laid further plans for procuring Christian's return to the Throne. With hope renewed by the defeat and imprisonment of Francis I of France at the hands of Christian's brother-in-law, Charles V, Norby moved from Gotland to Scania, where a mass of discontented peasants rallied to his banner. They were, however, defeated by John Rantzau in two successive battles, at Lund and at Landskrona. Norby was forced to surrender, but the haunting fears of the possible return of the fugitive King secured him very favourable terms. In return for the surrender of Visborg, he was awarded many rich estates in Bleking. From there he was later expelled by Frederick and the Hanseatic forces and, on the advice of Christian II, betook himself to Russia. Instead of aiding him to reconquer Finland, the Czar kept him captive in Moscow. Released later under pressure from Charles V, Norby ended a brave and glorious life while fighting for the Emperor in the siege of Florence.

A last hope came to Christian when the armies of the Emperor were advancing victoriously through Italy. He abjured the Lutheran faith, was accepted into the Catholic Church and recovered the rest of his wife's dowry. With a fleet equipped in Holland, he arrived at the south of Norway, where he could count on supporters, among them Gustav Trolle and many of the bishops. But luck once more deserted him. While besieging Akershus, which was defended by Mogens Gyldenstjerne with twenty men, he was driven off by a Danish and Lübeckese fleet and was persuaded to negotiate. The Danish commissioners who had arrived with the ships agreed to send Christian under safe conduct either to Copenhagen or elsewhere in Denmark for a friendly interview with Frederick. Christian's army was to be immediately disbanded and he was to be eventually sent to Norway or Germany according to his wish. In good faith Christian allowed himself to be escorted to Copenhagen.

Frederick's political position was then as favourable as it

SOUTH JUTLAND LEADS ATTACK AGAINST PAPACY

could be. He had settled all differences with the Netherlands, Sweden and the Hanse. As the Hanseatic towns and Sweden were only too glad to wash their hands of any responsibility for Christian, they accepted the decision of the Danish councillors to imprison him in Sönderborg Castle though it was a flagrant breach of trust. To add to his misery, Christian lost at this time his only son Hans. At first Christian, who was under the custody of four German noblemen, was allowed to walk freely around the castle. Only when his one servant, a dwarf, was found to be acting as a link with the outer world, was he kept in strict confinement with an old soldier as his servant. Luther wrote an admonitory letter to Frederick, but the King's hands were already tied. King Christian never completely recovered his freedom. There were, however, moments when his treatment was made lighter.

Christian II was one of the most remarkable kings that ever ruled Denmark. A two-sided character, his actions were often self-contradictory and revealed a constant struggle between old and new ideas. It was beyond any man's strength to hold mastery over three northern kingdoms, to break the power of the Hanse and at the same time to set up a new social order. He was to a large extent ahead of the times and of the ideas for which he fought. It could not be wondered that the great humanitarian plans that stirred his mind and guided so many of his actions did not reap their reward in his lifetime.

The change from a king who tried to reform the Church in alliance with the common people to a monarch who cast his lot with the privileged classes was the cause of the disrapture of the Danish Church. At first Frederick maintained the greatest reserve in religious matters. From fear of an understanding between Christian II and Luther, the Council of State pledged themselves in 1524 to oppose Lutheran "heresies." At the same time they aligned themselves with the Emperor's enemies as the wisest way of counteracting the activities of Christian II. Quite different was the situation in the Duchies. It was from South Jutland that the Danes under Herman Tast first directed their attacks on the Papal Church.

FREDERICK I BEFRIENDS LUTHERANS

He was before long to find two active supporters in Duke Christian and his friend John Rantzau, who headed the movement which was spreading over North Schleswig. Under the influence of these developments, Frederick chose to swim with the tide so far as he dared. A sign of this unforeseen conversion was the betrothal of his daughter Dorothea in 1526 to Christian II's merciless creditor, Albrecht of Prussia, who had renounced the Catholic world and gone over to Luther, thus breaking his vow of celibacy. No sooner had the marriage contract been signed than Frederick denounced the papal nomination of Jörgen Skodborg as the new Archbishop, with the result that the See remained vacant for many years.

In giving a sympathetic support to Hans Tavsén, a former monk, whose greatest converts to Lutheranism were the friends of the exiled King, Frederick was using as his instrument the finest of all Lutheran preachers in Denmark. Of strategic value also was Tavsén's success in winning over the nobility to his side. Together with Sadolin, an intimate friend of Luther, Tavsén played an active part in the propagation of the new doctrine in Viborg. There neither the opposition of the Bishop Georg Friis, nor the intimidation of armed men, could break the determination of the populace. On one occasion, when forbidden the use of the large church of the Grey Friars, they broke open its doors and took possession of the sanctuary. When Tavsén was prosecuted by the Bishop, the King ordered his release and made him in 1526 his servant and chaplain. As a further mark of favour, he was allowed some years later to raze to the ground all superfluous churches in Viborg and to convert the cloisters of the mendicant friars into parochial churches. The Catholic Church was also being threatened from another side. The nobility was only waiting its time to acquire some of the large estates and revenues of the Church.

The towns in the other provinces quickly followed in the steps of Viborg. In Malmö particularly the translation of the New Testament worked deeply on the minds of the people. The first Lutheran preacher in that city was Claus Mortensen, a man of unflinching courage and great eloquence. He and a collaborator, Hans Spandemager, prepared the first translation of the Book of Psalms into Danish. But his work was cut

THE DIETS OF ODENSE

short by the enmity of the new Archbishop, Aage Sparre. Though expelled from the country, Mortensen soon returned with a royal warrant to continue his work in Malmö. The leading clergy were equally unable to prevent the priests from taking to themselves wives, and Hans Tavsén was one of the first to set the example. The time had come when the King must take one side or the other in the religious conflict, though the decision was not an easy one. He could not break with the clergy and the Council, whose members were mostly Catholic, so long as Christian II was alive. A generally discontented man who could scarcely speak a word of Danish and who was always at variance with his Council, he preferred to spend most of his time in the duchies. He knew only too well that he had only to threaten his withdrawal from the throne to reawaken all the fears of the Council for Christian's return and to subordinate it completely to his will. In reality Frederick was one of the most notable of the Oldenburg Kings. Quiet and unassuming, he would confess to his Councillors a complete ignorance of matters under discussion which he nevertheless "unfolded with wisdom and ability." He had a peculiar and valuable gift of finding a middle way in all the controversies that aroused at that time the passions of parties.

The same calm judgment was brought into play when civil and religious questions were debated in two important Diets held in Odense in 1526 and 1527, which were attended by the leading nobility and clergy. At the first of these meetings, the bishops and prelates were made to agree that in future they would receive their appointments from the Archbishop of Lund and not from the Pope, and that the large revenues that had previously gone to Rome should henceforward be paid to the King. They were also induced to make important concessions to the nobles. In the interval between the two meetings, the bishops sought to retrieve their waning fortunes by inviting to Denmark some of the leading Catholic priests in Germany.

Meanwhile the men of Jutland had also chosen this interval to revolt against the payment of tithes and other charges to the Church. In answering an appeal from his Council that he should punish his rebellious subjects, the King replied that

PROGRESS OF LUTHERANISM

the people had the same right to complain as the clergy and that everyone should be allowed to follow his conscience. As an alternative he proposed a meeting in Jutland of the prelates and nobles to which there should be invited representatives of the towns and peasants. The members of the Council rejected the proposal as beneath their dignity. To humiliate them in return, the King entered into an agreement with the smaller nobility which resulted in the removal of the more serious grievances of the peasants.

The second meeting at Odense was in the nature of a compromise with the nobility and the clergy. The payment of the tithes was confirmed, but in such manner that it only affected the peasants and not the nobility. In unforgettable words the King maintained his rights before the assembly to act as the protector of full religious freedom. "The Council is well aware," he said, "that the Holy Christian faith is free, and that none should be deprived of their conscious faith. *I am King and Judge over the life and property in the kingdom but not over souls.*" He would protect "all who preached what was godly and Christian."

The onward march of Lutheranism threatened the complete overthrow of the Catholic Church in Denmark. Viborg and Malmö still remained the burning centres of proselytism. In both cities divine service followed the Lutheran rites and the monks either left their monasteries willingly or were ejected by force. All Catholic rites were excluded from the services, which were henceforth conducted in Danish. With the approval of the King, Malmö was provided with a school of higher education where Danish pastors were first trained by men of learning. The sermons and ministrations of Hans Tavsén succeeded in overcoming the last remnants of resistance in Copenhagen, which joined Viborg and Malmö as the principal refuges of Protestantism. But the news of the celebrated Diet of Augsburg revived for a time the fading hopes of the Danish bishops, who demanded the summoning of a Diet in Copenhagen at which both parties could defend their cause. The King felt himself unable to reject what appeared to be an equitable proposal.

The discussions at this Diet, as might be expected, were not

A CATHOLIC REACTION

conducted with moderation on either side and were chiefly notable for the tenacity with which the Protestants clung to their points and for the equal obstinacy of the Catholic representatives in refusing to discuss them. In the realisation that they must adopt other tactics if they were to make any impression on the King, the bishops presented 27 Articles which were intended to destroy all Protestant doctrines. "These articles," said their opponents, "contained as many lies as points." They in turn presented their own 27 Articles in defence of the Protestant faith and added a number of grievances against the administration of the bishops. The Diet dissolved without achieving any material results.

In the last three years of Frederick's reign the Reformation was adopted in nearly all parts of Denmark. Elsinore was one of the few towns that held steadfast to the Catholic faith. All the Catholic bishops disappeared from the scene except the far-seeing Knud Gyldenstjerne and Ove Bille, who were trying to adapt themselves to changing times. Victory had not been won without violence and the partisans of the old Church found it more prudent to withdraw into the background.

Frederick I died in April 1533, a year after he had imprisoned his nephew Christian II. His death came at a moment when the continuance of his government was most needed. He was popular with neither the people nor the nobility, but it was better to have an unpopular king than none at all. The general uncertainty left the door open to the revival of the social and religious feuds which foreign adventurers were not slow in turning to their advantage. The Reformation had taken hold on the towns, but not on all the countryside. The higher classes, as represented in the Council of State, could alone make decisions. The Catholic majority proceeded to suppress liberty of conscience and the free exercise of worship which had been enjoyed by the Protestants since the Diet of Odense of 1527. The clergy and nobility together opposed the election of Frederick's son, Christian, as a too fervent champion of Lutheranism. Because it suited their immediate ends, the revival of Catholicism went unchecked and was even approved. It showed itself in the reopening of the churches and cloisters, the restoration of Mass and in the exclusive



KING CHRISTIAN II IN EXILE

From a painting by Carl Bloch

THE WAR OF THE COUNT

rights of the bishops to make appointments to the priesthood. In silent protest, the Protestant members of the Council withdrew from the capital to incite Duke Christian to take possession of the throne, while the bishops were conspiring to elect Frederick's younger son Hans, whom they expected to bring up in the Catholic faith.

The plans of the Council failed for many reasons. Before they could meet after Frederick's death, the Duchies had already accepted as Dukes the four sons of Frederick, and Duke Christian would enjoy full powers in the Duchies while his brothers were still minors. It was obvious that, if Hans was elected, the administration of the kingdom and the Duchies would change hands in the course of time. Nor could the Council suppress the Lutheran elements in the cities of Copenhagen and Malmö which were headed by the two burgomasters, Ambrosius Bogbinder and Jörgen Koch. The Lübeckese, who were embittered by the commercial privileges granted to the Netherlands at the end of Frederick's reign, joined in the battle. The burgomaster of Lübeck, Georg Wullenweber, a man of humble origin, suddenly presented himself at the Assembly of Copenhagen and demanded that Denmark should break off her relations with the Netherlands. Instead the Danish Council of State preferred to sign a defensive alliance with the Netherlands for a period of thirty years. Crossed in his purposes of making Lübeck supreme in the Baltic at the cost of the Netherlands, Wullenweber made an alliance with Ambrosius with the dual object of placing Duke Christian on the throne and aiding the Reformation. If the plan had not been defeated by the refusal of Christian to inherit a throne by such methods, Denmark would have probably lived through a civil war between Lutherans and Catholics. In consequence of this refusal, Jörgen Koch conceived the idea of raising a revolt of bourgeois and peasants in the name of Christian II. In the fear of a war with Lübeck, Denmark strengthened her position by making alliances with Gustavus Vasa and with the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein.

In May 1534 the Lübeckese suddenly opened war with an attack on Holstein, leaving their fleet free to move on Denmark. The fleet was commanded by Count Christopher of Olden-

CAPTURE OF AALBORG BY JOHN RANTZAU

burg, a mixture of a lansquenet and a classical scholar. Alcibiades, as Melanchton called him, was full of sympathy for his imprisoned cousin, Christian II. Within a short time Copenhagen and Malmö had opened their gates and Fünen had submitted to him. In all the towns he traversed the Lutheran services were introduced. The menacing advance of the Count induced the nobility and clergy of Jutland to provide for their safety by choosing young Christian as their king. On the 4th June 1534 the representatives of the nobility and the clergy of Jutland and Fünen met in the village of Ry, near Skanderborg, and here the bishops were forced to append their signatures to the "act of election" which, they knew well, was the death-warrant for Catholicism. It was now the turn of Jutland to suffer an invasion of Christopher's forces. "Skipper" Clement, who had once fought for Christian II and was now in the service of Christopher, seized the town and castle of Aalborg and without difficulty rallied to his side several thousands of peasants and bourgeois. An army, which had been hastily assembled by the nobles to suppress the movement, was totally defeated. The revolutionaries celebrated their victory by plundering all the nobles' estates north and south of the Limfjord.

When the whole of Denmark seemed at the mercy of Count Christopher, events suddenly took another turn. Christian III concluded a peace with Lübeck which applied only to the Duchies, but, with the release of the troops which until then had been besieging Lübeck, he was able to send them, under the command of his able General, John Rantzau, to North Jutland to reduce the insurgents. Aalborg was taken by assault, but its capture was attended by the most barbarous acts. He spared only women and children: all men were put to death: Skipper Clement was made prisoner and executed two years later. The capture of Aalborg dealt a mortal blow at the brave peasants of Jutland. Even the survivors were sentenced to loss of life and property. Each of the rebellious districts was forced to sign the following document:

We, the undersigned, with the rest of the rebellious people of North Jutland having forfeited our lives and properties in a rebellion against the great and powerful lord, Christian, elected King of

SURRENDER OF COPENHAGEN

Denmark, we have, in order to save our heads from the consequences of this treasonable crime, surrendered and abandoned in our name and in the name of our heirs all our goods and estates to the King in perpetuity, unless he will be so generous as to pardon us.

The army of Rantzau then passed to Fünen where he won a decisive battle over the now hostile Lübeckese at Öksnebjerg, near Assens, in which Gustav Trolle was mortally wounded. Within a short time the whole of Fünen was in the hands of Christian III. The Lübeckese as a last resort sent an army under Duke Albrecht of Mecklenburg to join up with Christopher's forces. Meanwhile the middle part of Norway had rendered homage to Christian after the battle of Öksnebjerg, and the efforts of the Archbishop Olaf Engelbrektsen to save the northern part of the country for Christopher failed so completely that he was forced to take to flight. At sea the Danish arms met with equal success. Peter Skram, known as the "Audacious Dane," defeated a large Lübeckese fleet in the waters of Bornholm. When the seas had been cleared, John Rantzau took the army to Zealand in July 1535 and Copenhagen was invested by land and sea. The besieged, amongst whom were Duke Albrecht and Count Christopher, could only look to the Emperor for help, but he was engaged in a war with France. Lübeck then concluded a favourable agreement with Denmark at Hamburg, by which she regained all her former privileges and retained Bornholm for fifty years in return for the recognition of Christian III as King of Norway and Denmark. After a year's siege, the defenders of Copenhagen were driven by hunger and indescribable sufferings to sue for peace. The terms offered to the vanquished city were unusually generous. It had confirmed all the privileges it enjoyed in the time of King Hans, the practice of the Protestant faith was allowed free scope, and a general amnesty was declared but the King reserved for himself the right of choosing the magistrate. Count Christopher was made to swear that he would not set his foot again in Danish lands and Duke Albrecht was allowed to return to Mecklenburg. But the treacherous Wullenweber was executed two years later.

After the fall of Copenhagen, the primary concern of Christian III was to establish the new Church and the new

DIET OF COPENHAGEN

Faith either by lawful or revolutionary means. On the 12th August 1536 he summoned a secret meeting of the Council to which only the lay members were invited and laid bare his intention of depriving the bishops of their temporal power, and of confiscating their properties for the benefit of the Crown. The lay councillors gave their consent to a measure which made them omnipotent in that body. It was agreed that "in future the Government of Denmark should no longer belong to the Archbishop and other prelates, but to the King and his descendants, and to the laical Councillors of State and their descendants." On the same evening, all the bishops inside and outside the capital were taken by surprise and incarcerated. As this was a mere precautionary measure, they were released on promising to surrender their castles to the King and not to disturb the peace. So that the new changes in the Church should be given a popular flavour, a Diet was convoked at Copenhagen in October at which were present not only the councillors and the nobility, but representatives of the towns and the peasant class. It was here resolved that the dignities of the bishops should be abolished and that the Church should in future be governed by "superintendents" who should teach the people the Holy Gospel. The estates of the bishops were to be surrendered to the Crown and the tithes were to continue in force but not to be paid by the nobility. It was finally declared that the Government should be administered by Danes and that the nobility should retain most of their rights.

At the same Diet, Frederick, the King's two-year-old son, was declared heir-presumptive. Christian's capitulation differed in three essential points from the earlier ones. The right of electing the heir-presumptive in the King's lifetime was confirmed, the right of the people to rebel against the King, if he violated the capitulation, was abolished, and the Council of State was refused the right to alter the capitulation during the King's reign. No act passed during this memorable session gave a more lively impress of the power of the nobility than that which abolished the independence of Norway as an autonomous kingdom.

Norway [it stated], having so diminished in power and wealth that she can no longer maintain a King by herself and as she is

LEGISLATIVE REFORMS

bound to remain united in perpetuity to the crown of Denmark and, despite this obligation, has committed two acts of rebellion within a short period, we have promised the Council of State and the nobility of Denmark that, if we succeed in dominating Norway, she will remain subject to the crown of Denmark and will no longer bear the title of a separate Kingdom.

The feeble state into which Norway had fallen in recent years facilitated the execution of the act. The measure was dictated not by the King but by the Council and by the nobility who aimed principally at the seizure of estates in the country. The Norwegian Council was abolished and Norway was henceforth administered by a Governor and a Chancellor. Yet she still possessed her own laws, and kings were acclaimed in Oslo. The King was thinking most of Denmark's hereditary claims to that country.

With the Diet of Copenhagen ended the last act in the struggle between the people and the nobility. Bourgeois and peasants suffered the common fate of the vanquished. Through the humiliation of the clergy, the exclusion of the episcopate from the Council of State and the appropriation to themselves of a large part of the Church estate, the Danish aristocracy henceforth ruled the State in alliance with the King.

Christian III possessed all the qualities required for rescuing the country from the moral disruption that followed in the train of the civil war ; robbery and murder, misery and despair. He was above all parties and knew how to reconcile class with class. As a rule, criminal offences were tried by a court at which the King and the Council sat together and passed judgment. But Christian also took a lead in the administration of justice in the Town Halls, or wherever it occurred to him. In the months that preceded his coronation he was visiting all parts of Jutland and Fünen, settling disputes and getting in touch with the people. But the splendour and dignity of his coronation had perhaps more to say in arousing a common spirit amongst the people than all the laws that had been promulgated by the Diet of 1536. Christian too was the driving force in the most important of legislative measures, the new Church Ordinance which was drawn up by "learned men and preachers" and approved by Luther and his friend

CHURCH REFORMS

Johan Bugenhagen, the leading organiser of the new Evangelical churches in Denmark. The Ordinance was concerned as much with the administration of the Church as with its religious rights and divine services, which were based solely, he declared, "on the pure divine word, that is the Law and the Gospels." Bugenhagen's first act on arriving in Copenhagen was to perform the act of coronation, his second to consecrate the seven new "Superintendents" who replaced the bishops and were on this occasion appointed by the King. They were chosen from amongst the leading reformers and other distinguished theologists. Peter Palladius, a Dane, who became the first Bishop of Zealand, occupied the highest place in the Danish Church and Hans Tavsén, as Bishop of Ribe, the second place.

An inevitable result of the accretion of power to the Crown and the nobility was the appropriation of a considerable part of the monastic domains and much of the property of the Church. In vain Luther had pleaded that the estates of the Catholic Church should be applied to the needs of the new order and to the maintenance of the poor. Sanctuaries too were despoiled of their ornaments and often demolished to supply material for the building of castles. It was of some comfort to find that these licentious practices did not hamper the work of reconstructing churches and schools in conformity with the spirit of the Reformation. The scarcity of capable theologians to fill the empty places presented a serious problem. At the beginning spiritual welfare was dependent on the secretaries and servants of bishops and nobles and on ignorant monks who had embraced Protestantism.

Of no less importance was the restoration of the University, which had fallen into abeyance during the civil war. So zealously did King Christian apply himself to the task that, with the aid of Bugenhagen, courses were reopened in 1537. In the choice of subjects of instruction, its organisers were liberally guided. In the Constitutional Act of the University which was introduced in 1539, it was ordered that the Academy was to interest itself in the teaching of all the sciences which "would help open minds to understand the divine works and would raise capable men for the performance of civil as well

MARRIAGES OF THE CLERGY

as ecclesiastical functions." With this in view fifteen professorships were created: three for theology, one for jurisprudence, two for chemistry, eight for philosophy and one for music. Instruction in music was intended to make the students more "happily disposed towards their other exercises, more peaceful, more gentle and more sociable." The generous-minded King endowed the University with Church properties and tithes. In the high schools Latin was exclusively used. Except in the lowest classes, pupils were only to converse in Latin, and neither in lessons nor in games was the use of the mother tongue permitted. Only scant attention was paid to the rural schools. For a long time their instruction was restricted to the learning of Luther's catechism, hymns and prayers. The new heads of the Church attached special importance to the removal of the ban of marriage amongst the clergy and made it compulsory for priests to marry unless they wished to be excommunicated. Even the newly elected Bishop of Ribe was forced to obey and of his successor it is recorded that he married several times. The bishops were advised to be careful in the selection of their spouses. The wife must be "clever, faithful, truthful and a good housekeeper." As a general rule, a priest married the old woman who had lived for many years in his house under the name of housekeeper. That the widow of a priest should not be left penniless it became the general custom that she was taken as wife by his successor.

Christian III, if he had wished it, could have been an absolute monarch. He did not, however, possess a mind that was easily captured by new ideas though, once it was made up, he acted with the greatest determination. Caution he needed, for foreign principalities had brought him to power and the nobility of Holstein and Germany had furnished him with able Generals and advisers. The royal capitulation did indeed provide that only nationals should fill the high places and be members of the Council. Notwithstanding, in the first years of his reign, the real influence was in the hands of the Holsteiners. In those years Denmark was subjected to party rivalries for the guidance of the royal policy. The Rantzau circles wanted an independent Schleswig-Holstein; the Saxon,

SECOND DIVISION OF THE DUCHIES

Wolfgang von Utenhof, who was the King's Chancellor, was being pressed by Albrecht of Prussia to eliminate the Danish element in the State and to work for a Danish-German corporate State.

It seems that King Christian was early persuaded that real sovereignty in Denmark could only rest on the support of the Danish nobility. The German-Holstein influence had at any rate a counter-weight in the Council, apart from the fact that the policy of the Government was now being directed by the King's new Chancellor, Johan Friis. From the urgent necessity of conciliating all parties in the kingdom, the King brought into his service the best men of the time regardless of their religion or past history and he restored to the Council many of its former repudiated members. With few exceptions, all former enemies, bishops and nobles, regained their freedom. The threat of war with the Emperor—unreal as it proved to be—worked on the minds of the nobility and sufficed to impress on them the need of increased armaments accompanied by increased taxation, to which they voluntarily submitted. Now that the King could count on a loyal Council, he was able to override the opposition of the Holstein nobility to the recognition of his son Frederick as the lawful heir to the Danish throne.

On the death of Frederick I, Christian, as the son of his first marriage, and Hans, Adolph and Frederick as the sons of his second marriage were recognised as possessing common rights in the Duchies. The actual division of lands was not settled until Christian's three half-brothers came of age. John Rantzau, who wished to preserve intact the union of Holstein and Schleswig and opposed any division, gave up office. In a Diet at Rendsborg held in 1544, it was decided that the King should obtain the Sönderborg part of Schleswig, Hans the Haderslev portion and Adolph the Gottorp portion, that is, the counties of Gottorp, Stapelholm, Husum and Eiderstedt. The youngest son Frederick was later awarded the dioceses of Schleswig and Hildesheim in North Germany. Holstein was in this way divided between the three younger brothers. Government in the Duchies was not divided but changed hands from year to year : each prince in his turn represented

TREATY OF SPEIER

the others. The pernicious consequences of this division soon showed themselves when the brothers refused to recognise the King as their feudal lord on the pretext that South Jutland was a free and inherited fief and that they therefore had no obligation to do feudal service to the Danish King.

The greatest danger to peace in the reign of Christian III came from the married daughters of Christian II; Dorothea, who was married to the Elector Frederick of Pfalz, and Christina, who was married to Duke Francis of Lorraine. They threatened on many occasions to assert their rights to the Danish throne by force of arms. At first encouraged in their designs by Charles V, their hope of his active support vanished when the Emperor, judging that the re-establishment of commercial relations with the Dutch through the Sound was more important than the affairs of Christian II, signed a treaty of peace with Christian III at Speier (1544). The Netherlands were given the free right to enter the harbours of Denmark and Norway on the payment of duties and the King promised to lighten the treatment of the imprisoned Christian II, the Emperor's brother-in-law. The relations between Charles V and Christian III further improved when the latter refused to take sides with the Schmalkalden Princes against Germany. In 1546 Christian II renounced all rights to the Danish throne for himself and his successors.

No less precarious were the relations between Denmark and Sweden in the course of this reign. At various stages an armed clash seemed inevitable. It was mainly from the fear of a Catholic reaction and of a possible return of Christian II that they decided to hold together against the common danger. In 1541 they signed an alliance at Brömsebro by which neither of them could begin a war or make peace without the consent of the other; the two States were to render mutual assistance with their armies and ships in any war, defensive or offensive; any differences which might arise between them were to be settled by a number of arbitrators elected by each State; the terms of the alliance were to be binding on the successors to the parties of agreement. Though the alliance was intended to last for fifty years at least, the friendship between the two countries visibly cooled in the lifetime of Gustavus Vasa and

DEATHS OF CHRISTIAN II AND CHRISTIAN III

Christian III. To a great extent the fault lay with Christian, though Gustavus was always a very difficult neighbour. Christian's unwavering claim to be the ruler of all three Scandinavian countries sowed the seeds of hostilities that were to break out later between Frederick II and Gustavus Vasa's son, Eric XIV.

Though Denmark was never free from anxieties both within and outside her frontiers, the cautious policy which Christian invariably followed brought peace to the land in the last years of his reign. Religion meant everything to him and it impregnated the whole Court. It was of great comfort to him that he had at his side a loyal and devoted supporter in his wife Dorothea, who was no less attached than her husband to the cause of the Reformation. A man of simple habits, he resented the excesses of the time, such as sumptuousness in dress and intemperance. He died on New Year's Day, 1559, in his fifty-sixth year. Christian II, whose reconciliation to his cousin was complete and genuine, was so afflicted by the news that he died the same month after twenty-seven years of imprisonment.

CHAPTER XII

IN character and political outlook, Frederick II was the exact opposite of his father. He had neither the balanced judgment nor the self-restraint that had guided Denmark's policy in the past reign. He was the adventurous and impulsive type that is ready to rush madly into any venture that satisfies the thirst for excitement and manly prowess. He would be a "man and no monk in a cell." His knowledge of administrative matters was limited, and of his political leanings one only knew that he had the greatest antipathy for the Swedish royal house and for the German priestly régime. But these were not the sole reasons for the misunderstandings between father and son in Christian's last years. The principal source of friction was the determination of Frederick to marry Anne Hardenberg, a lady of noble descent and a lady-in-waiting to the Queen. So far apart were father and son that Frederick even declined to be present at the bedside of the dying Monarch. Finally, in his thirty-seventh year, he married Sophie of Mecklenburg, his first cousin.

Before being crowned, Frederick went with his uncles, Hans and Adolph, on an expedition to the Ditmarschen in order to efface the stigma that the campaign of 1500 had left on the Danish arms. The aged John Rantzau took command while Adolph lent all the experience he had gained when fighting for Charles V against the French and also the Schmalkaldic League. The Ditmarschen, who had expected an attack from the North, had their centre driven in at Meldorf after Rantzau had succeeded in cutting off their connections between the north and south. Their southern defences had to resist the whole army of Danes. They fought their last fight for liberty at Heide, a town in the north, where they had concentrated their main forces. Though victory went to Rantzau, it was not gained without great sacrifice ; many of the Holstein and

CONQUEST OF THE DITMARSCHIEN

Danish nobility were killed. With the memories of the past fresh in their minds the Danes fully expected that the peasants would continue to fight. There was consequently much surprise when on the day after the battle two priests entered the Danish headquarters to sue for peace. The Holstein nobility wished to exterminate the whole peasantry, but milder counsels prevailed. In the end the Ditmarschen swore loyalty to the King and the Princes, were made to reduce their fortresses, but were allowed to preserve their lands on condition of paying a land tax. In one month this small land, which for hundreds of years had thwarted all attacks on its independence, was completely conquered. In the division of the territory, the King received the southern part with Meldorf; the middle part went to Hans and the northern part to Adolph.

After the conquest of the Ditmarschen the King was crowned at Copenhagen on signing a capitulation, which was very similar to that of Christian III except that it omitted the important provision that fiefs after the death of the occupiers should return to the King alone. It was for the first time stipulated that the nobility were forbidden to purchase the lands of the peasants without royal sanction. On the other hand, the right of the nobility to trade in cattle with native and foreign merchants was fully confirmed. This was a very valuable concession.

In 1558 ill winds blowing from the East suddenly swept over all the Baltic States. Where the storm broke hardest was in the heterogeneous State of Livonia,¹ which consisted of a number of small States that acknowledged allegiance only to the Emperor and the Pope. Russia at that time was being ruled by Ivan IV who desired at all costs to extend his influence in the Baltic and in the Western States. An army of 70,000 Russians invaded Livonia which, divided and disrupted, could offer no resistance. The conquest of Narva in 1558 was the first indication of the Russian advance. This event was of the highest importance to all the Baltic States. If Russia was able, with her tremendous resources, to win a direct approach to the Baltic, this would draw trade away from the States that hitherto had taken the lead in trading between the West and

¹ The countries of Esthonia, Livonia and Kurland belonged to the ecclesiastical order of "The Knights of the Sword."

DUKE MAGNUS IN ÖSEL

the East. Unable to protect herself with her own resources Livonia turned for help to Denmark, who, in spite of the sale of Esthonia in 1346, still claimed the prior rights to Esthonia and Ösel. It was not until the Bishop of Ösel voluntarily surrendered Ösel and the province of Wieck to the Danish crown that Denmark allowed herself to be drawn into action. Here was the golden opportunity for Frederick to get his brother Magnus off his hands ; otherwise he would be compelled to cede to him part of the Duchies.

In the springtime of 1560 Duke Magnus sailed for Ösel to enter into possession of his lands. Denmark could scarcely have chosen a less suitable man than Magnus for filling this difficult post, nor was he given the necessary means for maintaining his position. He was 19 years old, inexperienced and light-minded. In his first half-year of government he became involved in the disputes which his own provocative acts in aspiring to the possession of lands outside his jurisdiction had ignited amongst Sweden, Russia, Poland and the Grand-Master of the Order of the Sword, Gothard Kettler. Gustavus was dead and his son, the impulsive Eric XIV, jumped at the opportunity of extending the powers of Sweden over the Bay of Finland. He proceeded to take possession of Reval and relieved Magnus of some of his occupied lands. Though Magnus was temporarily deposed he was allowed to return to his possessions under the control of a Governor, Didrik Behr, and two Danish noblemen, Christopher Valkendorf and Vincent Juel, on whom the real power devolved. The political aim was to ensure the neutrality of the Duke and to induce the Czar to recognise Danish rights in Esthonia. Denmark was fortunately successful in concluding a peace alliance with the Czar in 1562 by which Magnus would be allowed a part of Esthonia if Sweden could be successfully ejected therefrom.

It was the aggressive behaviour of Eric XIV that compelled Denmark to adopt a stronger policy in the Baltic. In Livonia Danish and Swedish interests were the direct opposite ; and another bone of contention was that Christian III in 1550 had implanted the three northern crowns on his arms, his seal and his currency. There were, however, larger issues at stake. But for Sweden's determination to end her encirclement by

SEVEN YEARS' WAR

Denmark, and Denmark's intention to bring Sweden to final subjection, there might have been no Seven Years' War.¹ Both sides were ready for war because they both desired it. But the Danish King had to fight hard with his Council before it was actually declared on Sweden. In the middle of 1563, a large army of 24,000 assembled in Zealand and Scania under the command of Count Günther von Schwartzburg, brother-in-law of William the Silent. The year ended with a Swedish attack on the south of Norway, in which Herjedalen and Jemteland were conquered. The capture of Elfsborg was the only Danish achievement.

During the year 1564 the Danish army showed little activity. Attacks and counter-attacks in Halland and Bleking followed one another without bringing gain to either side. Only at sea was the enemy seriously molested. The attempts by European Powers, chiefly Germany, to stop a sanguinary war failed because of the refusal of Sweden to negotiate. Land operations, therefore, were continued at the beginning of 1565. The inactive Count Günther was relieved of his command and Danish partly replaced German soldiers. The high command was given to the ninety-year-old Otto Krumpen, but the real command was held by the young Holsteiner, Daniel Rantzau, who had served with Charles V in Italy and had been wounded in the war with the Ditmarschen. In the autumn, Daniel Rantzau collected a sufficient force for delivering an open attack on the Swedes. He had withdrawn from the siege of Varberg on hearing that a Swedish army was on its way to cut his retreat. The two armies faced one another at Axtorna on the 18th October. The superiority of the Danish cavalry won the day. All the Swedish artillery was captured and 3,000 men lay dead on the field. But the victory was of little importance, for it could not be followed up: losses were heavy and the German mercenaries proved unmanageable. Rantzau's chances of success in the campaign which reopened in the following year with the devastation of the whole of Vestergötland were ruined by the outbreak of the plague in the army. Of the 8,000 men that followed him to Halmstad in July, all but 2,000 were to perish within a few weeks.

¹ See map, page 149.

DISASTER TO DANISH FLEET

While misfortunes were dogging the operations on land, Denmark met with no better fortune at sea. The new commander of the Danish fleet, Herluf Trolle, set off at the beginning of 1564 with 35 Danish and Lübeckese ships in search of the Swedish fleet which he hoped to subdue. He might thus cut off Swedish communications with the rest of Europe. Following a wild chase round Bornholm and Pomerania, he caught up with the enemy off Öland. After fighting for a whole day without results, the allied ships succeeded in separating the Giant Swedish flagship with her 173 guns from the rest of the fleet. The Swedish Admiral, Jacob Bagge, surrendered to the Lübeckese while his great ship exploded. All three fleets were badly damaged and withdrew into harbour. The year did not end without two more encounters, in one of which the Swedes were defeated and in the other 3 Danish ships were captured.

Despite these varying fortunes, the Danish fleet was master of the Baltic, but only for a while. *By the following year the Swedes had increased their fleet to the extent that it could compete numerically with the combined Danish-Lübeckese fleet.* Though Denmark had tightened her blockade of the Swedish coast, she had not the necessary ships to maintain it. The small fleet that was blockading Stralsund was easily driven away and many Danish ships ran aground. The loss of ships and revenues from the Sound dues and pressure from foreign powers compelled Frederick to raise the blockade in May 1565. Denmark's chances of maintaining her position in the Baltic were shattered by the proved superiority of the Swedish fleet. She received the final blow when, in July 1566, a furious tempest destroyed a large part of the Danish fleet off the island of Gotland with the loss of 7,000 men. A new attempt to close the Sound in the following year brought Denmark into difficulties with England and the Netherlands.

Official circles in Denmark were generally discontented over the meagre results obtained by Danish arms on sea and land. In these dark moments, it was decided to call back Peder Okse from his place of exile. There was no doubt that Okse had been one of the ringleaders in the plot to restore to the throne the heirs of Christian II; but all these plans

LAST STAGE OF WAR

lacked a firm basis so long as France and Spain refused to support them. The return of Okse to Denmark was necessary to restore confidence between the King and the Councillors of State, many of whom were his personal friends. A change in Danish policy was a crying necessity. The King, who in time of war had concentrated all power in his hands, was now mentally deranged, so that leadership for a time devolved on Peder Okse and Johan Friis. The French Minister in Copenhagen wrote to his Government that no prince had been worse served than the King of Denmark during these troublous years, but that in recent months a complete change had come about. So pleased were the nobility at this new accession of strength to the Government that they voluntarily surrendered one-third of their income.

Within a short time the finances of the country had sufficiently recovered to allow Daniel Rantzau to take the field in the autumn of 1567, at the moment when Eric XIV had become mad. This time Denmark aimed at nothing less than the complete subjugation of Sweden. For the success of this plan, Rantzau could only depend, for the moment, on an army of 8,500 men. Within a few days after the beginning of this campaign, the whole of Östergötland lay open to him. With small reinforcements he felt confident, so he informed the King, of being able to march on Stockholm and thus end the war. Whilst waiting, he succeeded with his small force in inflicting a severe defeat on the Swedes at Konungs Norrby. But with no news from Denmark and no reinforcements, and a large enemy force in front of him, he felt compelled to retreat. Nothing could excel in bravery and military strategy this retreat to Scania made at tremendous risks through lands ravaged by the enemy. It stands out as one of the most heroic retreats in history. Both parties were now so exhausted, militarily and economically, that no further operations were possible. It was a sign of Denmark's weakness that she could not turn to military advantage a civil war in Sweden that brought Duke John to the throne. A long-sought peace was not realised until Daniel Rantzau had been killed by a cannon-ball after the capture of Varberg at the end of 1569.

Many months followed the opening of the Peace Conference

TREATY OF STETTIN

of Stettin, under the intervention of the Emperor of Germany and the Elector of Saxony, before peace was signed on the 13th December 1570. Sweden was to pay 150,000 riksdaler for Elfsborg and surrender her possessions in Livonia to Denmark though under the feudal lordship of the German Emperor. Denmark further obtained clerical rights over Herjedalen and Jemteland, which had formerly been under the authority of the Archbishop of Upsala. The dispute regarding the employment of the three crowns on the Danish arms was left to arbitration. Of greatest significance to Denmark was that she renounced all her claims to Sweden and that Sweden on her side abandoned her pretensions to Gotland, the Scanian provinces and Norway. This was the first time that a union between the northern countries was legally dissolved. Lübeck obtained a war indemnity and freedom of trade with Sweden.

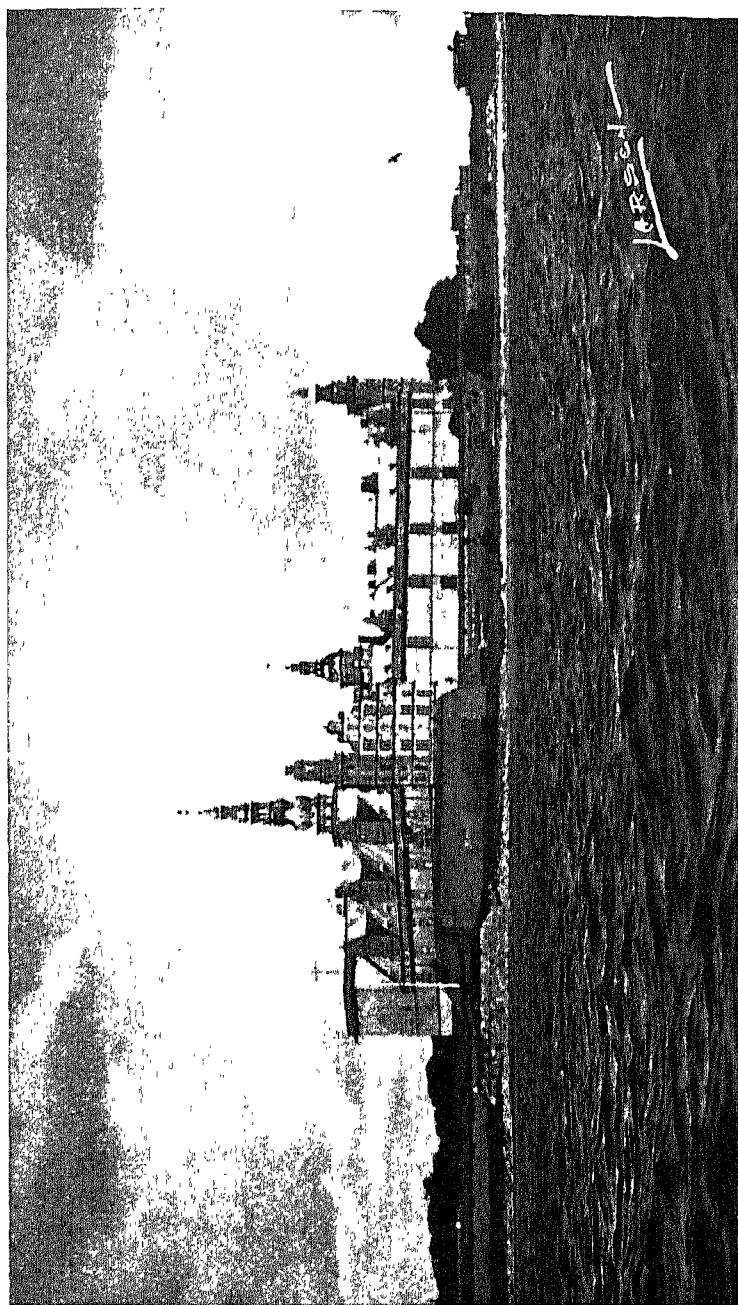
But for a state of general exhaustion, the terms of the Treaty of Stettin would probably have been less faithfully observed than was the actual fact. Some of them were never fulfilled. Denmark indeed never obtained possession of her feudal rights to Livonia. Feelings of mistrust and bitterness that memories of the war had instilled in the minds of Danes and Swedes embittered their relations in the years that followed. But there was a general will for peace and Frederick's abstention from interference in the interior affairs of the Baltic States was of great value for the maintenance of peaceful relations. Neither the Emperor nor Frederick disputed the right of possession when Sweden won back Esthonia from Russia.

From the end of the Seven Years War until the death of Frederick II, Denmark lived in peace and, through a wise and foreseeing policy, used this long period in improving her economic condition. It can well be said that without Peder Okse, who was mainly responsible for this era of increased prosperity, the military ambitions of Daniel Rantzau would have never been gratified. But the bitter experiences of the war had also taught Denmark the lesson that the extent of her military and economic forces must henceforth be the measure of her limitations in foreign adventures. It was for her now to concentrate her attention on the most essential task ; protection against foreign domination of the Baltic and

DOMINUM MARIS BALTICI

North Seas and the maintenance of peaceful relations with Sweden. When Peder Okse died, Frederick II took a greater share in the affairs of government, but most of the administration fell to Christopher Valkendorf, who had distinguished himself as the King's vassal in Norway, particularly in the elimination of the Hanse's influence in that country.

While Denmark was now compelled to share power with Sweden in the Baltic coast lands, she succeeded in maintaining her supremacy in the Baltic Sea (*dominum maris baltici*). Her policy was not only to preserve the right to keep fleets in the open sea but also to levy dues on all ships sailing through the Sound and the Great Belt. The position of "Master of the Baltic" implied the obligation to keep the waters free from sea pirates. The importance of the Sound to Denmark was recognised in all parts of Europe. When Philip of Spain was laying his plans for an attack on England, the control of the Sound became a matter of political interest. Because of the Catholic sympathies of John III, Philip was more drawn to Sweden than to Denmark with her ultra-Protestant King. Negotiations between the Spanish envoy and John were brought to the point of proposing that Sweden and Poland should join Spain against the Netherlands and Denmark. As Philip was apparently unwilling to pay the price of this alliance, nothing came of these plans. Queen Elizabeth had more to fear from an omnipotent Danish king who could, if he willed, stop England's trade with Russia through the Baltic and round the north of Norway. Already in the middle of the sixteenth century Dutch and especially English merchants had discovered a trade route to Russia to the north of Norway and Archangel. The view of the Danish Kings that foreign trading by this route was an infringement of their rights to levy dues on all ships sailing to Russia by the northern or the southern route was recognised by the English Company trading in the Antarctic, who paid yearly the sum of 1,000 Danish marks for the right to sail round Norway. To give added emphasis to Danish supremacy at sea, Frederick built the great fortress castle of Kronborg in front of the Sound, where every passing ship must anchor and pay the dues before she could proceed on her course.



KRONBORG CASTLE

ATTEMPTS TO FORM A PROTESTANT ALLIANCE

In his political relations with foreign countries, Frederick's strong Lutheranism played no part. He was always on the friendliest of terms with the Imperial House of Austria : in 1587 the Archduke Matthias, a later Emperor, was in Denmark courting the hand of the King's daughter Elizabeth. The revolt in the Netherlands was the starting-point in the great struggle which enveloped the greater part of Western Europe and from which Denmark, despite many enticements, kept strictly aloof. In the closing of the Sound, Denmark had a weapon which, if used against the Netherlands, could be a menace to their trade. On the other hand, the relations of the Royal House to the House of Orange awakened the hope of effective support, and the common danger of a Catholic reaction made common action both desirable and necessary. Between the Scylla and Charybdis of European politics, Denmark steered with a firm and sure hand.

Denmark was by nature one of those States, Lutheran or Calvinist, which Queen Elizabeth endeavoured to enlist in the fight against the "Papal plot." In 1582 she conferred on King Frederick the Order of the Garter. In the following year Henry of Navarre sent his emissary, Ségur-Pardailhan, to England, Germany and Denmark to draw all evangelical princes into a common alliance. Although Frederick warmed to the plan, his hands were restrained by the lukewarm response of the German Princes. Queen Elizabeth then revived the plan of inviting Frederick to call a meeting of all the interested parties. Again the King was well disposed, but his attitude found no support from the Landgrave of Hesse. It was privately made known to Elizabeth through Lord Willoughby, the English Minister in Denmark, that the King was prepared to offer her a fleet for assistance against the Spaniards. When the Queen enquired how many ships he could send and further demanded that the Sound should be closed to the Hanseatic towns in order to prevent war contraband reaching Spain, the King replied with an offer to mediate between England and Spain and to effect a reconciliation between the King of France and Henry of Navarre. In 1586 he sent Ministers to England, France, Spain and the Netherlands to negotiate peace, at the same time calling together a

CONFERENCE OF ODENSE (1579)

meeting of the German Princes at Lüneburg. The Danish Ministers who had been visiting England and Spain returned with peace proposals so diametrically the opposite that all further negotiations were useless. In one of Frederick's last letters to Elizabeth he expressed his grief that his attempts at mediation had failed. On the day of the King's death, the Spanish Armada left on her fatal expedition to England.

After the Seven Years War the King and the Princes in the duchies set their minds earnestly to the removal of the two greatest sources of controversy: the obligation of Schleswig to do feudal service and the apportionment of the Royal share of the Duchies. At a Conference in Odense (1579) the first question was decided in favour of the King, but the actual position of Schleswig was left undecided. The matter was revived acutely when Hans the Elder died the following year without leaving heirs. Adolph immediately demanded the fief as under Danish law he considered himself nearer in the succession than the son of his half-brother Christian III.¹ A compromise was reached under which Adolph received the districts of Tönder and Lögumkloster and the King obtained Haderslev, Törning and Rendsborg. This division of Schleswig into four parts was preserved for a long time. Both the Royal and Ducal possessions stretched from sea to sea.

In the time of Frederick II Danish commerce benefited greatly from the decline in power of the Hanseatic Towns. On account of its direct connections with the North and Atlantic Seas Hamburg alone retained its position. The attempts of this city to create a monopoly in the sale of produce exported from the Duchies were frustrated by Frederick. So active had the Danish export trade become that Jutland alone exported yearly 50,000 cows and 150,000 pigs. The growing commerce of Denmark brought her into competition with many other countries, particularly England. The discovery of a northern passage by the "Company of Merchant Adventurers" robbed the Sound of its exclusive position as the channel through which England had hitherto traded with

¹ In 1564 the King had given his younger brother, Hans, part of his possessions in the Duchies. The descendants of Hans were the princely houses of Glücksborg and Augustenborg.

TYGE BRAHE

Russia. When the Swedes captured Narva in 1581, the Russians were excluded from the Baltic. Also in relation to Iceland English and Danish interests clashed. Whereas 150 English trawlers had visited Iceland in the year 1528, the competition of the Hanse and the refusal of Denmark to allow English fishing in Icelandic waters without royal approval ended this form of traffic.

Frederick II was no less zealous than his father in the promotion of learning. He treated with the same liberality native and foreign scientists. Besides augmenting the revenues of the University, he founded a college in Copenhagen, where 100 students received free board and free education. For the first time the cloister of Sorö opened its doors to the children of the middle classes as well as of the nobility. In this reign Denmark was particularly fortunate in the number of distinguished men of learning that lived in her midst. An outstanding figure was Henry Rantzau, son of John Rantzau, who was famed throughout Europe for his great riches, his erudition and cult of the arts as exhibited in the collection of statues and paintings which adorned his castles. Another dominant figure, who was particularly patronised by the King, was Tyge Brahe who built the great castle of Uranienborg, where he established a school for young scientists and devoted twenty-one years to the study of astronomy. In the island of Hveen, donated to him by a grateful sovereign, he constructed a tool factory, a printing press and a chemical laboratory. Foreign artists, painters and architects were made welcome, and he rejoiced in educating the young in mathematics and natural science. His profound knowledge of these subjects made him despised by the nobility, who considered that he had brought disgrace on the family arms by indulging in such pursuits and still more by marrying a lady of the middle classes.

While Frederick was according every freedom to the study of natural sciences, he would not allow the minds "of men to run riot on religious speculation because dissension divides the Church of Christ, leads youth astray, undermines worldly authority and increases the Pope's powers." Already in the time of Christian III foreigners desiring to enter Denmark

THE ROYAL CREED

had to submit to questionings on their religious beliefs. Frederick II now forbade the entry of foreigners unless they conformed to his own twenty-five Articles of religion. The infringement of this Royal Creed meant the loss of life and property. The most unjust victim of this narrow sectarianism was Niels Hemmingsen, a learned theologian and a Professor of Greek in the University of Copenhagen. As a systematic theologian he was known throughout the Protestant world and as an authority on national law he was among the fore-runners of Grotius. His attempts to bridge the gulf between pure Lutheranism and Calvinism—he held to the Calvinist views on the Communion—aroused the animosity of the German Lutherans. In his days orthodox Lutheranism had not yet set its mark on Denmark. Under strong pressure from the Elector August of Saxony, Frederick dismissed Hemmingsen from his chair in the University. A Canonry in Roskilde assured him, however, a maintenance during his last twenty years. From the King's later actions, it may be gathered that the order of dismissal was very reluctantly given. Hemmingsen, who withdrew many of his reformist principles on being brought to justice by the King and the Council, might have escaped persecution but for the attempt of Jacob Andrae, the leader of the protesting theologians, to introduce subtle novelties into the Lutheran doctrine in a new "formula of unity." It is related that the King, on receiving a copy of the "formula" from his brother-in-law, the Elector of Saxony, threw it into the fire exclaiming that he had "caught a devil and intended to burn it." The booksellers who sold the pamphlet were threatened with the penalty of death: priests in possession of it were to be deposed.

The reign of Frederick II marked a turning-point in the history of the Danish nobility. The King felt himself to be the first of the nobility and lived like a nobleman. As it was no longer a military class, the greater majority devoted itself to the cultivation of land and the conversion of small into larger estates, with the result that the system of day workers, which had almost died out in the Middle Ages, was revived. Already Johan Friis, Frederick's Chancellor, was saying: "God will one day punish Denmark, particularly the noble-

THE NOBLE AND THE PEASANT

men and the rich, for their useless and arrogant display." With the change in the lives of the nobility there came also a change in the upbringing of their children. Instead of sending them to the cloister schools as heretofore, they placed them with the grandmother who claimed the first right to the new-born infant. It therefore often happened that children first made the acquaintance of their parents in their fifteenth or sixteenth year. In their seventh year they were usually sent to a Latin school, after which they spent many years in foreign lands. On their return they were either enrolled in the Court or in government offices. The whole administration in Denmark from the time of Frederick II until the coming of absolute monarchy was in the hands of the nobility.

Difficult as it is to follow the lot of the peasant, which changed from century to century, it is at least certain that, with the sixteenth century, the social standing of this class began to deteriorate. The crushing defeat they had suffered in the War of the Count, which had deprived thousands of their homes and had turned many more land-owning peasants into enforced tenants of the Crown or nobility, reduced them to an evil state. It resulted that landowners could demand more work from their peasants, who were thereby subject to new and worse conditions. The mere fact that tenants were subject to the authority of the estate owners on whose lands they resided changed compulsory labour from an insignificant thing into a bitter reality. Far the largest number of peasants' homes were tenancies either under the Crown or the nobility. The reduction in the number of self-owned properties deprived the peasant class of its essential strength and the Crown of a valuable source of revenue. To protect a class which contributed to the economic progress of the country and paid most of the taxes, the government made great efforts to save them from the attacks of the nobility. "I will not have my peasants destroyed," declared the King. The peasant class was, however, not without protection and could always fight for its rights. If changing circumstances had brought them greater hardships, they were never in dire economic distress. The greatest evil was the sale of unemployed peasants by one

DEATH OF FREDERICK II

landowner to another. After the time of the Reformation, it was a rare occurrence.

Frederick II died at Antvorskov on the 4th April 1588 at the age of 53. Without more than an average intelligence, he performed religiously his royal duties in the last phase of his life. Men of learning mourned over the loss of their protector. He was a popular king and understood his people. A weak trait, not uncommon in those times, was his addiction to strong drinks, a habit which probably shortened his days.

CHAPTER XIII

ON the death of Frederick II, there could be no doubt as to the successor to the throne, for young Christian had been elected in his father's lifetime. According to tradition, his birth was foretold by an old peasant, who further prophesied that "he would be the first among all Kings and Princes in the Northern world. But when disaster should overtake his land because drunkenness, light-mindedness and wilfulness increased day by day, he should abandon all such habits so that God would not visit the land with greater wrath and punishment."

True to this prophecy Christian was born a few months later, on the 12th April 1577, and was baptised in Our Lady's Church in Copenhagen. To this ceremony all the King's in-laws and his half-brother "Old Hans" were invited. There followed dancing and fireworks "until wine, sleepiness and fatigue drove everyone to bed." At the end of a festive week, Christian was snatched from his mother's arms and dragged off to Mecklenburg by his grandparents. Two years passed before he returned with his older sisters, who had been reared in the same place.

The greatest attention was paid to his upbringing and when 5 years old he was given as tutor Henry Ramel, a Pomeranian nobleman, and, in his seventh year, a disciplinary school-master named Hans Mikkelsen who was one of the greatest pedagogues of the time. In a royal letter of 1583 he was awarded a yearly salary of 200 riksdaler, "a dress suitable to his position and a uniform for his servant." He was also promised a canonry at the first favourable opportunity. His pupil was to be "disciplined in the fear of God, and in languages and other faculties and in pure morals." He was also to take care of the child's health and keep him away from evil surroundings. In mournful recollection of his own neglected

CHRISTIAN'S UPBRINGING

and untutored childhood, Frederick gave the emphatic order to exercise proper discipline and not to allow the Prince to "have his own way." After a few years of tutelage in Sorø cloister in the sole companionship of his teachers, Christian was constantly on the move from one royal castle to another with Hans Mikkelsen always at his side. At the end of these years' tuition, he was well grounded in Latin, French and Italian and showed a strong predilection for drawing, architecture and technical science. In later days he would make his own designs for buildings and warships. The young King was wont to complain that too many of his school hours were spent at a desk and too little in bodily exercise.

After the death of his father, Christian's upbringing was confided to the Queen-Mother and a committee of four Councillors who governed during his minority. They were the cautious Chancellor Niels Kaas, Admiral Peder Munk, and the two oldest members of the Council, Christopher Valkendorf and Jörgen Rosenkranz who was Governor in North Jutland. In natural gifts and imaginative powers Valkendorf was the most weighty figure not only in the committee but in the Council. His whole official life was devoted to a strong monarchy, a well-ordered administration and sound finance, and particularly to the uplifting of the bourgeois class. A strong-minded character, he was not altogether fitted for a government who were more inclined to go peacefully forward than to take any initiative. The mild and conciliatory Niels Kaas was better suited to the occasion.

The path of the new Government did not look too easy. There was first the foreign situation. What if the Spanish Armada, whose object was to crush England and the Dutch rebels, were to come to Northern waters? Up till then the peace of Stettin had kept the waters quiet, but the horizon now looked dark. With Sweden there were a number of controversies still unsettled and the religious situation in Germany was becoming more and more confused. Denmark, through the medium of her Regency, showed on the whole an intelligent reserve and rejected all attempts to entangle her in foreign commitments. There were difficulties within her doors which needed more urgent attention. Those of the

ANNE OF DENMARK

nobility who had been displeased with the government of Frederick II because of attacks on their privileges and the employment of foreign noblemen were not likely to be more conciliatory towards the temporary Government.

But such matters gave way for the moment to a more pressing problem presented by the Dowager Queen S^{oph}ie. Avowing that it was far from her thoughts to interfere in the affairs of government, she demanded of the Council the surrender of her marriage jointure, namely, the Crown lands in Lolland and Falster, the rights to superintend her son's upbringing and to obtain suitable husbands for her daughters. At the end of a long tussle, in which the Queen's fiery temperament was matched against the sober judgment of the Council, she attained her ends. She threw herself with fervour and with economic understanding into the work of administering her hard-gained possessions. In a few years she was able to make large loans to her son, to whom she left on her death in 1631 a princely inheritance.

Of Queen Sophie's matrimonial plans, it may be said that she was successful in winning the hand of King James the Sixth of Scotland for her second daughter Anna. On the 1st September 1589 Anna sailed with a fleet to Scotland but was overtaken by a violent storm and driven into Oslo. On receiving the news, King James decided to take his bride by surprise and arrived unexpectedly in Norway. Immediately on their meeting he desired to kiss Anna, from which she asked to be excused because it was not a Danish custom. The marriage ceremony took place in November at Akershus and was followed shortly afterwards by a visit to Denmark, in which James showed a husband's loyal interest in the literary and scientific exhibits of the land. The marriage did not end in happiness. From the moment James ascended the English throne, he lived oftenest apart from the Queen. She could not resist mingling in politics and in the religious movements of the time, and she was accused in England of holding to the Catholic faith. She died in 1619 at Hampton Court and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

While James and Anna were being married, both Valkendorf and Ramel fell victims to the intrigues of a hostile nobility.

POSITION IN THE DUCHIES

Valkendorf was disgraced for having executed a daring adventurer and pirate named Mogens Hejnesen. Ramel was dismissed because he was a German nobleman. The new head tutor was Hak Ulfstand, a man of no significance, and his appointment was bitterly opposed by the Queen-Mother, the more so when he succeeded Valkendorf in the Regency. This was only one incident in a series of outbursts between Sophie and the Regency which unfortunately played their part in Denmark's relations to the Duchies.

The position in the Duchies in 1580 was that the King had the greater part of Holstein and his uncle Duke Adolph most of South Jutland. Adolph died in 1586 and his eldest son Frederick in the following year. After the death of Frederick II, neither Adolph's younger son Philip, the nearest heir, nor Christian, were of age. Philip's mother, Christina of Hesse, maintained her son's right to his father's land; Sophie was no less determined that the King's portion of the Duchies should be divided amongst her sons. Henry Rantzau, who held the greatest power in Holstein and who, though a German, was politically loyal to Denmark, was in favour of the Queen acting as Regent for her son, but was opposed to any division of the royal part of the Duchies. The end of it was that both Christian and Philip were elected to the Duchies by the Landdag. When Philip died in 1590, his brother John Adolph was chosen in his stead. In working for the election of John Adolph, Sophie had deliberately ignored the Council of State with the object of fostering the rivalry between the Council and the Schleswig-Holsteiners to the advantage of her sons. The Council forthwith invited the Emperor to accord Christian IV full powers in Holstein, an invitation which was accepted in 1590. Although the indomitable Sophie made the Emperor change his mind, the Regency and the young King felt themselves strong enough to override the Imperial orders and Christian took over the government. The conflict between Sophie and the Regency was all the more painful because Christian took the side of the latter. When the Council's patience was at an end, she was politely requested to take up her abode at Nykøbing Castle in Falster where, as has been said before, she spent the remainder of her days.

CORONATION OF CHRISTIAN IV

With the retirement of Niels Kaas and the approaching majority of the King, the Regency declined in power and influence. In his last days Niels Kaas called for the King and handed to him the key of the vault in which the royal jewels were kept. He begged Christian to "have regard for the fleet, which was Denmark's best protection, to honour the crown, to hold the sceptre with wisdom and grace, to bear the sword with righteousness and strength." He died in 1594 and was buried in Viborg Cathedral. Two years later Christian was declared of age.

The Denmark which Christian IV inherited, large as it was, was not a united whole. In addition to the Denmark of to-day, it comprised the greater part of the Duchies, Scania, Halland and Bleking, with the islands of Gotland and Ösel, and Norway. The division of the Duchies amongst princely lines prevented real amity between Schleswig and Denmark, and the manner in which the districts of Holstein and Schleswig had been intermixed was bound to confuse the relations of one to the other. Schleswig, which was a Danish fief, was in many respects joined to Holstein which was a German fief. The agreement of 1536 that made Norway a province of Denmark was never carried out. She was regarded as a separate kingdom with an hereditary monarch. In reality Norway was a Danish dependency which, though possessing her own legislation, was administered by Danes. Her importance to Denmark lay in her sea trade.

The festivities which followed the coronation of King Christian IV at Our Lady's Church in Copenhagen were a signal departure from the practice of the Middle Ages when tournaments were the order of the day. On this occasion they resembled a modern fancy dress dance though with a more original and libellous setting. Some dressed up as Indo-Europeans, Turks, Persians, Indians and niggers. Another motif was a parody on the Roman Church. Christian IV sat arrayed as Pope Sergius with the triple crown on his head, surrounded by monks, cardinals and courtesans. Then came the spectacular turn of Alexander, Scipio, Hannibal and Hector running up and down the Gammeltorv, and of Venus sitting in a wagon drawn by ostriches, with Mars riding at her side.

KING, NOBLE AND BOURGEOIS

Later generations might view in a different light these festivities, which were clearly intended to popularise royalty and to attract attention.

In general appearance Christian IV would impress any onlooker : an upright manly bearing, a high and strong forehead and piercing brown eyes that fell behind a somewhat crooked nose. The physical strength that he had acquired in his early youth remained with him until his last years. Although an adept in all forms of sport, he delighted most in art and music. There was, however, the other side to his character ; he was sorely given to drink and sensual indulgence and fond of frivolous amusements. For all his defects he possessed the keenest sense of duty and never set aside his royal duties. But in every sphere of life there were lacking in him the refinements that were needed in a great king.

At the end of the sixteenth century when most European countries witnessed a strengthening of royal power, Denmark possessed a king whose main power rested on the revenues derived from Crown lands. He was neither an hereditary monarch nor could he act in public matters without the approval of his Council. The nobility on their large estates had administration over all the peasants that resided therein, and the King could only in his own right levy taxes on his own peasants. Therefore the monarch had in most things to share sovereignty with the nobility. At the time of the accession of Christian IV, the Danish noblemen were, apart from being a political power, an agrarian upper class. All those below the King and the nobility were known as " subjects." Nominally the clergy still enjoyed the highest social rank. As they were now recruited mainly from the lower classes, disputes between the priests and landowners over the question of tithes became more frequent. There were not a few of the nobility who sought to widen their estates at the expense of the Church. It is of importance to add that at this time a composite bourgeois class came into existence. While in the Middle Ages every town and village was its own world, the feeling was now gaining ground that clergy and burghers had common interests and common enemies.

The King was fortunate during his first years of rule in the



KING CHRISTIAN IV

NEW TOWNS AND NEW FORTRESSES

possession of remarkable men as his advisers. In the forefront stood his Chancellor, Christian Friis of Borreby, a staunch conservative and somewhat of an egotist. For no adequate reason Christian, immediately after his coronation, deprived the great scientist Tyge Brahe, who had been the loyal friend of Frederick II, of his most important fief, Nordfjord in Norway, and of his income. The old astronomer left penniless his home in Hveen and spent his last years in Prague enjoying the friendship and patronage of the Emperor Rudolf. But Tyge Brahe was not the only man that was sacrificed to Christian's policy of humbling the nobility. Of more lasting consequence were Christian's collisions with the Council of State.

The first thirty years of this reign were given to peace, and were only broken by the short Kalmar war. They were diligently used by Christian in administrative reforms and in the bequeathing to posterity of the great and noble buildings which are associated with his reign. The first sign of his interest in bringing uniformity to the administration was the simplification of the existing laws and regulations. In his economic reforms, he used to a certain degree the rising influence of the bourgeois class. Though less self-supporting than in the days preceding the War of the Count, the towns on the other hand enjoyed greater prosperity. They were no longer at the mercy of the feudal nobility and stood directly under the King. Christian IV worked hard in developing commerce, though his aims were often hampered by the Councillors of State as representatives of the provinces. This explains the fact that Christian could only devote himself in his first years to the rebuilding or planning of towns, harbours and fortresses. Many of the harbours, as that of Copenhagen, were extended and improved. Two fortresses, Christianstad in Scania and Christianopol in Bleking, were laid out as defences against Sweden. In Norway the old town of Oslo was moved westwards to the walls of Akershus and was given the name of Christiania (now Oslo). In Denmark he either laid out or planned fifteen cities in all. These towns were constructed with the dual object of establishing new trade centres in suitable surroundings and of founding fortresses

COMMERCE AND THE FLEET

and sally-ports. In his endeavours to abolish the Middle Age institutions in the towns for the benefit of the State, Christian was naturally opposed by the guilds who monopolised trade. As in all his industrial undertakings, Christian met with little success in his efforts, and the guilds lived on for another two hundred years.

To discover new outlets for commerce it was in the first place necessary to discover new routes. The North-West passage having proved an empty hope, there came to life the Danish East Indian Company, which opened a new epoch in the history of Danish commerce. It obtained from the King the sole right to trade during twelve years with the East Indies, China and Japan. Many years passed before it came into active operation. Two Danish ships, who had been invited to Ceylon under the pretext of being granted a monopoly of trade in return for assisting her Emperor against his enemies, found on arrival that they had been duped. The expedition could at least point to the acquisition of Tranquebar, which henceforward became the central point in the Company's operations.

The fruits of all these reforming labours were most discernible in the city of Copenhagen. From a provincial town it became the leading city and it owed more to Christian IV than to any individual since the days of Absalon. He completed the fortifications of Christianshavn, and built Holmens Church and the Exchange. He took no less interest in the interior life and order of the city.

For a person of Christian's nature, the question of national defence came before all else. The interest which he took in his fleet brought quick results. New warships were either built or bought. It is well known that Christian took a personal hand in the designing of ships or at least part of them. He was so much impressed by the English navy on his visit to England that he brought back with him a shipbuilder, David Balfour. On the outbreak of the Kalmar war Christian had ready sixty ships as compared with the nineteen ships at the time of his accession. Only by the greatest exertions could the army be brought up to a greater strength than 4,000 militiamen. But it was a mere caricature of an army ; they

FREDERICKSBORG CASTLE

were poorly exercised and the non-commissioned officers were peasant boys.

The fever for building huge and imposing edifices struck Christian in the very beginning of his reign. The rebuilding of Koldinghus, which began in 1598, provides the first clue to his building activities. But the work which was the dearest to him of all was the building of Fredericksborg Castle. The old dwelling of his father's time being too contracted, Christian set himself to build a new and far more splendid castle on the islands in the lake. Its erection, which was supervised by the King in person, was completed in 1621. Though French in conception, many of the details were Dutch and Scandinavian. It was characteristic of Christian that he contented himself with a small sleeping-room with one bay window, which was only provided with a red English cloth and a camp bedstead. As Fredericksborg was too far from the capital, he proceeded to build Rosenborg Castle, which was finished in 1624 and was essentially Renaissance. The large buildings in Copenhagen erected by Christian belong to a later period.

At the end of the sixteenth century, Denmark was in such good condition that European countries thought it worth the trouble to beg for her assistance in the conflict between Catholics and Protestants. These overtures, however, received no response from a cautious Regency. When Christian IV came to the throne, the scene quickly shifted from a religious to a political platform. The new King regarded Denmark as essentially a northern kingdom. Her great aim must be to establish her supremacy in the Baltic in rivalry to Sweden who, after the peace of Teusina signed with Russia in 1595, had obtained Esthonia and Narva. Meanwhile the Netherlands had ousted the Hanse from her Baltic trade, but the approaches lay through Danish Straits.

Sweden at this time was the prey to singular happenings. King John III was succeeded in 1592 by his son Sigismund, who was also King of Poland and a Catholic. It could only be a question of time before the Catholic King and John's brother, Duke Charles of Södermanland, as protector of the Protestants, came to blows. The son of Gustavus Vasa, Charles was culturally less gifted than his father but as a

WAR WITH SWEDEN

statesman his equal. Before Sigismund had been a few years on the throne, Sweden was in the throes of a civil war which ended in his defeat at the battle of Stangebro in 1598. On Sigismund being deposed, Charles became first of all President of the State and later King.

The names "Stangebro" and "Teusina" must have rung ominously in Christian's ears, though he was to be no more yielding in his attitude towards Sweden. In addition to the old questions of the control of the passages round the North Cape and the bearing of three crowns on the Danish arms, there were many others that were rising to the surface. In 1607 Charles IX laid out the city of Gothenburg on the island of Hisingen, just where the Swedish province of West Gotland pushes in between Denmark and Norway. After the conquest of Narva, Sweden was forbidding Danish ships to sail to that port and thus seriously threatening Denmark's position in the Baltic. On his side Charles was angered that Sigismund's followers had been given a refuge in Denmark.

But for the Council of State Christian would have declared war on Sweden in 1604. Yet, as the time drew nearer to a war, the Council was gradually bowing to the King's will while the Swedish Council and all the Swedish assemblies were striving to hold back their king. In 1611 Christian took his final decision when he informed his Council that, if it refused its sanction to a war with Sweden, he would make war on his own as Duke of Schleswig and Holstein. Faced with this ultimatum, the Council gave way; extraordinary taxes were approved and the King was merely recommended to maintain good relations with England, the Netherlands and the Hanse.

The herald that bore the ultimatum to King Charles was so long in returning that Christian took the law into his own hands by marching into Bleking with an army of 6,000 men and crossing the frontier into Smaaland. At the same time a left army under the command of Sten Maltesen Sehested was ordered to advance on Elfsborg. The two armies were to unite in Smaaland and move on Stockholm, while a Norwegian army under Enevold Kruse was to invade West Gotland. After being thrice stormed, Kalmar fell into Danish

CAPTURE OF KALMAR AND BORGHOLM

hands before Charles, who had not expected an attack from that quarter, arrived with an army of 12,000 men. In the following weeks Kalmar was the scene of many indecisive operations. Young Gustavus Adolphus, the eldest son of Charles, took by surprise the new Danish fortress of Christianopol in Bleking. This was followed by a mass attack on the Danish headquarters to which Christian had returned. The Danes had only 8,000 against 20,000 men, but Christian's courage and daring put heart into his small force, which drove the enemy back to the well-fortified position of Ryssby, two miles north of Kalmar.

The Danes then concentrated all their strength on the capture of Kalmar Castle, which had so far resisted all attacks. It surrendered on the 3rd August with its 200 guns. The defending commander, who was branded as a traitor by his countrymen, appears to have surrendered as an act of vengeance against the King, who had mishandled him in the past. During his remaining years he was under the protection of King Christian, who enfeoffed him with an estate in Holstein. Five days after the surrender of Kalmar Castle, Öland with its fortified castle of Borgholm surrendered to the Danes.

The infuriated Charles, although 61 years of age, challenged his thirty-four-year-old opponent to a single combat because he had not behaved as a "Christian and honourable King." To this challenge Christian replied :

We let you know that your coarse and impolite letter was delivered to us by a trumpeter. We could not expect such a letter from you, but we note that the Dog Days are not yet by and that they are still working powerfully on your mind. Therefore we will refer to the old motto that an echo returns a compliment. As to one of the fights you refer to, it seems to us very laughable since we know that you are frail and that it would serve you better to remain behind a warm stove than to fight with us, and that you need more a good doctor who can cure your brain than to meet us in a duel. You should be ashamed, you old fool, to attack an honourable man. You must have learnt such amongst old cronies. Cease to write while you can still do anything because we hope with God's help that you will need all your strength. Meanwhile we will remind you to release our two trumpeters and herald whom you arrested at the outbreak of war. You must understand that, if you do them the least harm, you have not won Denmark or Norway. Take care of

PEACE OF KNÄRÖD

yourself that you do not do more than you can bear. This is our reply to your coarse and impolite letter.

In the late autumn of 1611 the Danes could make no further progress and withdrew into winter quarters. When Gustavus Adolphus had recaptured Öland, the Danes held the town of Kalmar and its castle as the only fruit of their exertions. On the 30th October Charles IX died and Christian's hopes of internal dissensions in Sweden revived. The first act of the new King, Gustavus Adolphus, was to offer peace to Denmark on the condition of the return of Kalmar to Sweden. Christian would hear nothing of it and the war began again in mid-winter though only on a small scale. Both sides were occupied in collecting reinforcements. Christian did much recruiting in England and Germany and re-equipped his fleet. A new plan was drawn up in 1612. First Elfsborg was to be besieged with 10,000 men, whereafter the Danish left wing should advance on Jönköping and the right advance beyond Kalmar. The forts of Elfsborg and Gullberg fell in rapid succession to the Danes and their fleet recaptured Öland. But strategical mistakes on the part of Christian and his generals, a shortage of supplies and a futile attempt of the Danish fleet to reduce Stockholm brought the campaign and the war to an end. Having conquered Jemteland in Norway, the Swedes had attempted to raise a revolt of the country against the tyrannical Danes, but this attempt met with no response from the Norwegians. A body of 300 Scotchmen, under the command of Captain Alexander Ramsay and George Sinclair, were captured at Gudbrandsdalen, when crossing Norway to assist the Swedes, and summarily put to death.

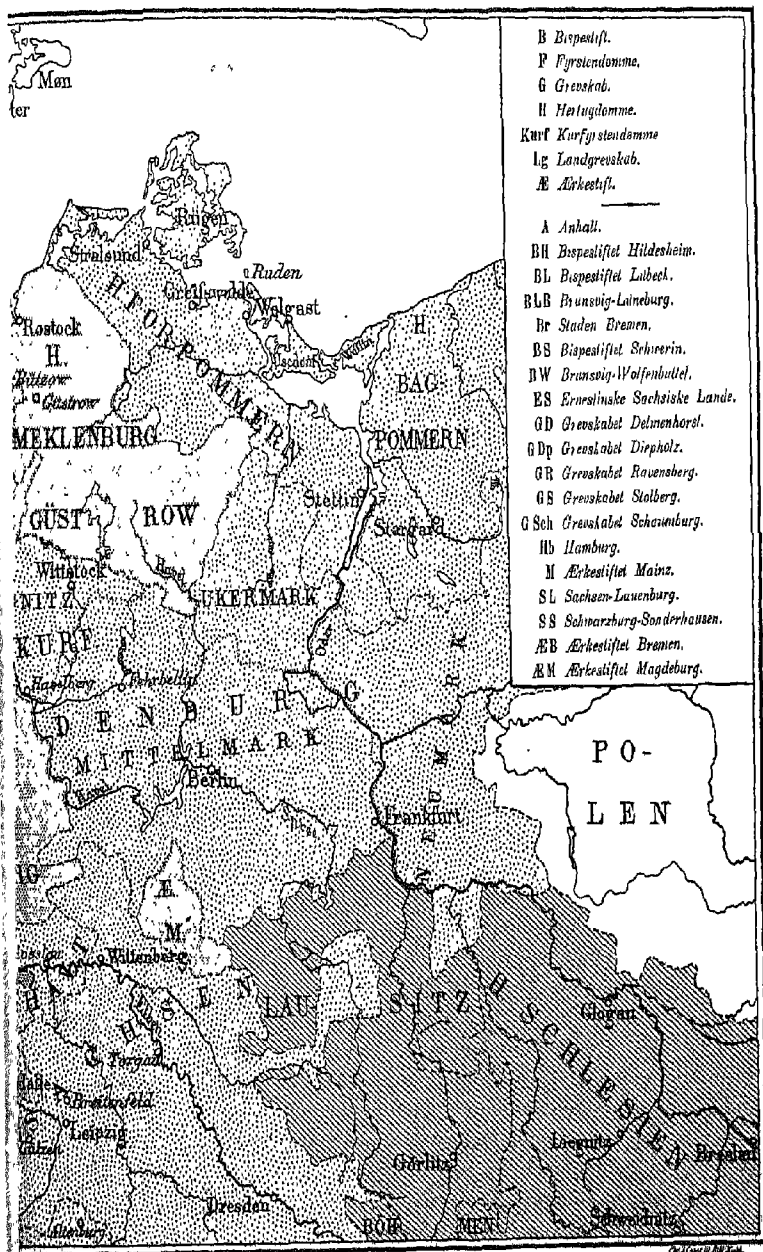
Conditions in both countries necessitated peace. Although Christian had penetrated far into Sweden, there was no hope of ever conquering it. In October 1612 the envoys of both countries, together with English arbitrators, met at Knäröd in Halland to discuss peace conditions. After two months' negotiations Sweden acknowledged Denmark's right to the use of three crowns on her national arms; Denmark agreed to free Swedish vessels from the Sound dues; and both countries agreed to return all conquered territory with the exception of Elfsborg for which Sweden was to pay an in-

INCREASING ISOLATION OF DENMARK

demnity of 1,000,000 riksdaler specie ; payment was to be made in six years and seven Swedish counties were to be held by Denmark as security until the amount was paid.

The war ended in a victory for Denmark, but not an overwhelming one. It was scarcely worth the effort because Denmark, unlike Sweden, had used up all her resources. Moreover, it nearly ended in a breach with Lübeck who had long nursed grievances over Christian's attacks on its privileges. All said and done, Denmark retained her position as the strongest Northern State. Yet the war had left Christian disappointed and Gustavus Adolphus embittered. The peace of Knäröd was little more than an armistice. Denmark's political position steadily deteriorated while Sweden waxed stronger, threatening more and more Danish maritime interests. In 1617 Gustavus Adolphus, in signing the peace of Stolbova, obtained Ingermanland and in the next year began his conquest of Livonia. These conquests were plainly only part of a fixed idea : the acquisition of the Baltic coast lands and the pinning down of Russia and Poland to definite frontiers. The bitter lessons of the Kalmar War drove the Netherlands, Lübeck and Sweden into a defensive alliance for the protection of their trade in the North and Baltic seas. Christian was quite unable to construct a military machine so powerful as Sweden's. Conditions at home impeded it as well as the King's narrow political vision. Rightly or wrongly, he refused to join company with either the Protestant or Catholic Powers, or with the Poles against the Swedes.

Apparently unperceived by Christian, Denmark was becoming more and more isolated. As direct action against Sweden was out of the question, his thoughts turned to North Germany, with the double object of helping his own family and of opening new trade routes by the Elbe and the Weser to the detriment of Sweden. The despatch of warships to the entrances of these rivers was the first indication of the King's new policy. The attempt to annex the rich episcopal Sees in North Germany, on which Christian had set his heart, naturally aroused the opposition, not only of the Catholics, but of the small Princes who were no less covetous. Much depended on the turn of political events in Germany. In



IN THE YEARS 1625-1629

ALLIANCES WITH ENGLAND AND THE NETHERLANDS

1618 Bohemia was in a state of revolt against the House of Austria and in 1619 the Protestants elected as their king the Elector Frederick V. Though the Danish Council was in favour of helping the Elector with money, Christian was clinging to the principle of *non agitur de religione, sed de regione*. All doubts were set at rest by the banishment of Frederick from the Empire in 1620 and the seizure of his lands.

Previous to this event, however, Christian had been drawn into another line of action by England and the Netherlands. His brother-in-law James I of England was the father-in-law of the Elector Frederick. Feeling in the Danish Council was strong for an *approchement* with the Western Powers, and a Dutch mission which came to Denmark in 1620 with the proposal of a general alliance was given a warm reception. Herein lay the possibility for Christian to make Denmark the leading power in the North, to break the alliance between the Netherlands and Sweden, and to make an alliance with England. The restraints which the Council imposed on Christian's liberty of action without the certainty that all attempts to secure peace had been exhausted saved him from an act of imprudence, as later events were to prove. A meeting of the Princes of Lower Saxony, which was convoked at Segeberg by Christian, contented itself with a warning to the Emperor. Shortly afterwards the Protestant Union was dissolved.

Yet these negotiations were not without significant results for Denmark, who speedily signed defensive alliances with England and the Netherlands. Preparatory to his next move in North Germany, Christian retained the troops which he had hired with the Council's approval. The strength which these alliances gave him was shown in the ease with which he obtained the election of his son Frederick to the Archbishopric of Bremen and, with the same moral support, forced Hamburg to recognise the overlordship of Holstein. The more hopeless the Protestant cause appeared to be, the less reluctant seemed Christian to pose as its protector.

In 1623, when war seemed inevitable, circumstances were present which called imperatively for a reconciliation with Sweden. The alliance between the Netherlands and Sweden was still in force, the agreement between Denmark and England

THIRTY YEARS' WAR

had not been ratified and, above all, the political situation in Europe was changing. Under the leadership of Cardinal Richelieu, a strong coalition was being formed against the Emperor, to the indirect benefit of Protestantism, and the northern powers were expected to play a part in it. In the summer of 1624 the English Government sent Sir Robert Anstruther to the Netherlands, Denmark and North Germany and another emissary to Sweden. The missions were more concerned with the danger of a Spanish-Hapsburg domination in Europe than with religion. Christian, who rightly foresaw that Denmark would be left in the cold if Sweden alone accepted the proposal, told Anstruther that, as the dangers to Denmark of joining a coalition as a neighbour of Germany were greater than those of England and Sweden, she could not participate in a war, but might in such an event lend England financial assistance. But this was the voice of the Council, not Christian's. On Anstruther's second visit both countries agreed to provide troops.

Having satisfied himself that the promised aid of England would bring his forces up to 30,000 men, Christian summoned a meeting of German Princes at Lauenburg, where he was chosen only by a small majority to command the army which was to defend Lower Saxony. Brandenburg wanted the command to be given to Gustavus Adolphus. In any case, common leadership would have been impossible, for Gustavus would always refuse to share the honours with Christian. It looked slightly ominous for Christian that at Lauenburg his own relation and vassal, Frederick II of Gottorp, Brunswick and many other of the Lower Saxon circle had voted against him. In defiance of his Council and without any certainty of support from the Western Powers, Christian IV took up the fight against the Emperor and the League in his own and Denmark's interest.

After handing the Government over to his son and elected successor, Christian, the King took command of an army which was much more German than Danish. He began with a force of 15,000 to 20,000 men, which was reinforced later by divisions from Lower Saxony. Christian chose as his first line the Weser. No one knew whether he intended to act on

DANES OPPOSED TO TILLY AND WALLENSTEIN

the defence or to deliver an attack against Tilly, whose army stood west of the Weser. With an undisciplined army, unpaid officers and the refusal of Brunswick, Bremen, Lübeck and others to obey his orders, an immediate advance was doomed to failure. On the 18th July Maximilian of Bavaria, under the orders of Tilly, forced back an advance division which Christian had sent to Höxter, north of the town of Weser. At this moment, when all depended on bold leadership, a fall from his horse put Christian *hors de combat*. Although he was able to return to the front two months later, the accident had left him a weakened man.

Encouraged by the weak morale of his opponent, Tilly pushed his way forward until he was arrested at Nienburg. There followed many minor encounters in which the King won many advantages, but in reality the campaign was as good as lost. Tilly still held his own in the south-eastern part of Lower Saxony and the Emperor also had decided to enter himself into the fray, now that Wallenstein, Prince of Friedland, had offered his services and an army. With Wallenstein's entry the Thirty Years War entered on a new phase.

In September Wallenstein with 20,000 men advanced from Austria to Lower Saxony, occupying Magdeburg and Halberstadt. If he and Tilly had been less jealous of one another, there would have been an end to Christian's campaign. When there was little hope of help from England or the Netherlands, and the first year of the war had brought no results, Christian entered into negotiations for an armistice, but the Imperialists would not rest until they had finished with the Evangelists. By calling in Danish troops for the first time, Christian brought his army up to 40,000 men at the beginning of 1626. Notwithstanding that one of the leading princes of Lower Saxony, Duke George of Brunswick-Lüneburg, had deserted to the Emperor, Christian decided to embark on a new campaign. He obtained an opening advantage in occupying Wolfenbüttel in Brunswick. John Ernest of Saxe-Weimar was sent to the Western Provinces to keep open the connections with the Netherlands and to secure the election of the King's son Frederick to the bishopric of Osnabrück, which was facilitated by the movement of Tilly's forces to Paderborn. Mean-

BATTLE OF LUTTER-AM-BARENBERG

while Christian's left army under Ernest von Mansfeld had advanced too far towards Silesia and suffered a serious defeat at Dessau. As Wallenstein did not follow up his victory and the Elector of Brandenburg was distracted by rumours of a peasants' revolt in Austria, the Danish advance on Silesia was renewed. At the same time the retirement of John Ernest had encouraged Tilly to turn his forces against Hesse and to eject therefrom Christian of Brunswick.

After the fall of Göttingen Tilly moved forward to Nordheim, but was there held back by Christian. The King, however, wasted several days before he marched on Thüringen. He might have cut off the two armies of Tilly and Wallenstein if he had not run short of provisions and for that reason been forced to retreat. Pursued by Tilly's forces, Christian decided to stand and fight near Lutter-am-Barenberg, a small fortified town. While he himself was engaged in a flanking movement, General Fuchs, who had been left in command, either deliberately or from a misunderstanding, delivered a strong frontal attack on the enemy which completely failed. Fuchs was killed, the King himself was in danger, and the flight became general.

The defeat of Lutter of the 16th August 1626 was a decisive event in Danish history, though it was imperceptible at the time, and Christian's energy and resolution remained unabated. In spite of reverses he was able to maintain his position in North Germany during the winter. But in July 1627 Wallenstein crossed the Elbe and seized most of the Jutish peninsula without opposition. Everyone who could fled from Jutland to escape maltreatment. With the victorious army followed the Catholic priests and Mass was celebrated once more in all the parochial churches. The last part of the royal army surrendered on the 6th October near Aalborg and entered the service of the Emperor.

The indignation of the Council of State at the series of disasters for which they held the King alone responsible was also directed against the heir-pretendant, who had spent his time in idle dissipation with his mistress, and against the King's wife, Kristine Munk, who was regarded as his evil adviser. When the first flames subsided the Council agreed

WANING FORTUNES OF DENMARK

to co-operate with the King on the understanding that a National Assembly was convoked to pass urgent measures for the safety of the country. At this meeting new taxes were approved as well as new defence measures. The Council also insisted on immediate peace negotiations and on its control of the finances. Joined to the complete isolation of Denmark was the new danger to the Baltic of the Imperial policy which aimed at a unified Germany. The Imperial Court wanted to catholicise all the Principalities of North Germany and to bring Schleswig under the Hapsburgs. With this in view Wallenstein was appointed General in command of the Baltic Sea. He hoped with the help of a Spanish fleet to make a landing in Fünen. In face of these common dangers, Gustavus Adolphus and Christian formed an alliance in 1628 under which Sweden promised to place 8 warships at the disposal of Denmark in the Baltic, whilst Denmark closed the Sound to all the enemies of Sweden. Though the alliance came to nothing, it had a moral effect on the Emperor and Wallenstein.

It was now evident to the Emperor that Denmark could never be conquered without a fleet and the support of the coastal towns in the Baltic. As the Hanse was not inclined to bow to Spanish domination, Wallenstein decided to use force. He was, however, unable to conquer Stralsund, for at the moment Christian was making a naval attack on the coasts of Holstein and was guarding the Baltic towns with a naval division. But a luckless attempt by Christian to obtain a foothold in Pomerania and the withdrawal of the Danish garrison from Stralsund left Sweden the sole protector of the Hanseatic towns against Imperial aggression. In Jutland Christian's only remaining stronghold was Glückstadt, which was withstanding all the attacks of Tilly. For all that could be seen, the rest of Jutland might remain permanently in the hands of the enemy.

Despite their victorious career the Emperor and Wallenstein were beginning to weigh the perils of continuing the war. They were still without a fleet and the defence of the long German coast was an impossibility. It was clear to Wallenstein that Sweden would enter the war sooner or later. It was finally agreed to open peace negotiations at Lübeck. At this

PEACE OF LÜBECK

Conference Denmark demanded the return of all the conquered parts of Denmark and Holstein, an indemnity and the promise of freedom for the Evangelical Confession in Lower Saxony. In regard to the North German provinces, they should be secured for the King's sons by negotiation. Before the Imperial delegates received their final instructions, Christian and Gustavus Adolphus, who were now on more amicable terms, met at Ulfshaek in Halland to discuss their common interests. As statesman and politician Gustavus was in every way the superior of Christian. As a realist Gustavus would welcome an alliance which would save Denmark from ruin and serve the interests of Sweden. Their views being the exact opposite—Denmark would be no party to the aggrandisement of Sweden—the meeting led to no results. Gustavus employed all his powers of persuasiveness, but his direct appeal to the Danish Councillors to co-operate with the enemies of their religion roused Christian to fury. "What has the Emperor done against you?" he asked. Gustavus brusquely replied: "How can you ask such a question? Whoever does anything against us, Emperor or King, Prince or Republic, or a thousand devils, we shall take them by the ears so that their hairs shall stand on end." With these stormy words the meeting was closed.

No one could blame Christian that he refused to share the honours of war with Gustavus Adolphus. None but a great statesman could have utilised this historic occasion to unite the two countries in a friendly tie. Also events were to justify the wise forethought of the King. The peace terms, when finally evolved, could scarcely be more satisfactory to Denmark. The truth is that Wallenstein earnestly desired peace and rightly regarded Gustavus as the real enemy of Germany. Nearly all the Danish demands were accepted; all conquered lands were returned to her and Christian undertook to interfere no more in the internal affairs of Germany. Peace was signed at Lübeck in May 1629. Christian's four years' war with the Emperor was ended.

Not even the most sanguine of Danes could have believed in the possibility of a peace which respected the territorial integrity of Denmark and saved her from a Catholic reaction.

ROYAL MARRIAGES

But it would take ages to repair the damages that had been wrought on the whole province of Jutland—churches without steeples, ravaged forests and thousands of empty houses. No less serious was the state of the country's finances. In these critical days when the nation needed a strong leader, it found in Christian a changed man after the war. An English Minister wrote that the King was silent, depressed and restless and sat musing during the hours of repast. It was scarcely surprising that, in this state of depression, Christian should have given little encouragement to a deputation of bourgeois and peasants of Jutland when they came to solicit his protection against the nobility, whom they regarded as the betrayers of the country and hated even more than during the War of the Count. They also asked for the restoration of the much-neglected privileges of the Provincial Assemblies and for the removal of taxes. The only concessions they obtained were a small reduction in taxes and the distribution of money to the poor.

It happened in 1628 that Christian parted company with Kristine Munk on the ground of her infidelities with a Rhinish Count. Between the children of Kristine, many of them born out of wedlock, and the two children of Vibeke Kruse who became the King's mistress, there was perpetual enmity which was not without historical consequences. These years of peace were mostly given to family events: deaths, marriages and scandals. Christian was to lose his mother, the ex-Queen Sophie, and a son of much promise, Ulrik. The King and his Council were much relieved when the restless and libertine Prince Christian found a wife in Magdalena Sibylla, the daughter of the Elector John George of Saxony. The marriage was childless and laid a heavy burden on the finances of the kingdom. Later, the King's next eldest son, Frederick, celebrated his marriage with Sophie Amalie, the daughter of Duke George of Brunswick-Lüneburg. This marriage was to be of high significance for the Royal Line and the Kingdom of Denmark.

When Christian had sufficiently recovered, bodily and spiritually, from his past misfortunes, he returned to his favourite occupation of builder and architect. Kronborg was

REORGANISATION OF DEFENCE FORCES

rebuilt after its destruction by fire and Glücksborg Castle, which was to become one of the King's favourite residences, was built at Glückstadt. In Copenhagen he began the building of two new churches: the church of the Trinity which is associated with the Round Tower, and the round-shaped Church of St. Anna. In this period only one new town was laid out—namely, Christiansand. In the promotion of trade he continued the practice of creating new companies and a serious attempt was made to revive the East Indian Company which had fallen into bad hands.

The only form of real activity in the long interval between two wars was the reorganisation of the defence forces. New ships were ceaselessly built, and in 1636 a measure was introduced for the private supply of defence ships. The building of the Nyboder (new buildings) provided fixed homes for hundreds of sailors. The greatest problem was the provision of officers; the nobility helped little and, though the Council clamoured for the sole employment of nationals, only a small number of service men were Danes and Norwegians. In view of the defencelessness of the country, as had been proved in time of war, new fortifications were constructed. The most important was Christianspris which was built in front of the Kiel Fjord. A national force was organised in 1628, and was to be of great service in the last years of war. The renewal of the old defensive alliance between the Kingdom and the Duchies was a direct invitation to send troops to the frontier. This frontier force was a combination of foreign hirelings and national conscripts, which would be useless against the military power of Sweden.

In her valiant efforts to recover her lost strength, Denmark was hampered by the state of her finances more in this period than in the years after the Seven Years' War. A contributory cause was the amalgamation of the revenues of the King and the State. All the relations between the King and the Council in these years pivoted around the question of finance. The Council's only source of revenue was taxation, of which three-fourths were borne by the peasants, and the rest by the clergy and the townspeople. Although the King possessed many sources of income, it was chiefly derived from the returns on

CHRISTIAN'S RELATIONS WITH THE COUNCIL

his fiefs. He was debarred by the Council from exacting greater contributions from his vassals, particularly when there were no bounds to the royal expenditure. In the matter of Customs Duties, the King was in a stronger position. From old times it had been the royal privilege to levy duties without the approval of the Council. Christian abused this privilege to such an extent that the Sound dues, his richest source of income, rose in ten years by 300 per cent although fewer ships passed through the Strait. This exorbitant raising of the Sound dues exposed Christian to infinite dangers from the outside world.

It would, however, be a mistake to think that Christian ever completely surrendered to the will of the Council. In the direction of foreign policy he was usually his own master. In principle the responsibility for foreign policy was shared equally by the two Chanceries, Danish and German. The Danish Chancery concerned itself with Russia and Sweden, and the German Chancery with the Southern and Western lands. From 1629 onwards Christian found the German Chancery the most serviceable for his ends. The men who directed the King's foreign policy in his last years were neither Danes nor noblemen. They were recruited either from Germany or Holstein. All his six illegitimate daughters by Kristine Munk were married to Danish noblemen, among them Franz Rantzau, the High Steward, Corfits Ulfeldt and Hannibal Sehested. The King took a fatherly interest in all his large progeny, but the beautiful and talented Leonora Kristine, who was married to Corfits Ulfeldt, had the first place in his affections. In spite of the preferences shown to his sons-in-law, he was able to preserve the loyalty and friendship of many members of the Council.

One would have thought that Denmark, however lamed and crippled after her four-years' fight for Protestantism, would have been better advised if she had set aside her jealousy of Sweden and shared her victories in Germany. But the Danish Council was always bent on preserving peace. The policy which commended itself most to Christian in the following years was to keep Sweden rammed in the Baltic and in North Germany while he kept his powder dry in order to be

THE ELBE DUES

free either to participate again in a war or to assume the rôle of mediator, whichever course seemed the most advantageous. But there was an uncertainty in all Christian's plans which contrasted sadly with the realistic schemes of his northern rival. What mattered to him most at the beginning was the collection of the Elbe dues which brought him into conflict with Hamburg. In exercise of the supreme rights over the lower Elbe granted by the Emperor, Hamburg refused to obey Christian's orders and sent a fleet to Glückstadt. Ignoring the remonstrances of the Council, Christian armed a fleet of 20 vessels and, after a four-days' fight, forced the Hamburgers to withdraw. Although the King's prestige was momentarily enhanced, the political results were unfortunate. Viewed as a whole Christian had made enemies of everybody by his conduct. The Emperor rightly viewed with displeasure Christian's encroachments on the Elbe, and England and the Netherlands were opposed to the Elbe dues in any form. Only jealousy of the Hanse prevented the Dutch from resorting to force.

While Christian was striving to maintain his hold on the river frontier, Gustavus Adolphus was securing a firm foothold in the north of Europe. Under the truce of Altmark (1629), which ended the war between Sweden and Poland, the former obtained possession of Livonia and a large stretch of the Prussian coast, with the right to collect dues in its harbours. Uneasy at the open attempts of Gustavus to win primacy in the Baltic, Christian negotiated with the Duke of Pomerania for the surrender of Rügen from the fear that it would fall into the hands of Sweden. The negotiations had scarcely opened before the Swedes were in actual occupation of the island. But for the restraining hand of the Council of State Christian would have undoubtedly chosen this moment for declaring war on Sweden. When Gustavus made no further secret of his designs on Germany by the landing of his troops in the island of Usedom (1630), Christian conjured the hope that the betrothal of Prince Christian to Magdalena Sibylla of Saxony might go hand in hand with his scheme for a new Protestant Union. The marriage took place, but Christian's great plan fell to the ground. When Gustavus defeated Tilly at

CHRISTIAN RISKS ANOTHER WAR

Breitenfeld on the 17th September 1631, Christian began approaches to the Emperor in the hope that he would profit by Wallenstein's sudden return to Imperial favour. Unbeknown to his Council, he authorised Christian Pentz, the Governor of Glückstadt, to negotiate underhand with the Imperial armies for the occupation of Bremen by Danish troops with the ulterior aim of securing the Archbishopric for his son Frederick. A Danish force at the same time occupied Freiburg, only to be overcome by the army of the Archbishop John Frederick. The peace-minded party in the Danish Court happily intervened and the danger of an immediate war was averted. It then entered Christian's mind to pose as a peace mediator in European affairs: Sweden should be prevented from annexing Pomerania but should be allowed to exercise power over the remaining Evangelical states in the Roman Empire. Whatever Gustavus Adolphus might have thought of these plans, his brilliant career was untimely ended in the battle of Lutzen of the 6th November 1632.

Any hopes that Denmark may have entertained that the death of Gustavus Adolphus would weaken the position of Sweden were rudely dispelled by Axel Oxenstjerne, who was no less determined than the late King to make Sweden supreme in the North. For the moment Christian's star was in the ascendancy. Although his attempts to negotiate separately with the Emperor to the detriment of Sweden ended in failure, he was able to obtain certain advantages. In July 1633 the Emperor allowed him the collection of the Elbe dues for a period of four years, and, when a year later occurred the death of the Archbishop of Bremen, Duke Frederick was elected in his stead. The King had now obtained all his heart's desires. He was still entrenched on the Elbe and the southern frontier seemed sufficiently guarded against Catholics and his Protestant rivals. But the satisfaction was temporary. It was soon evident that the Emperor had no serious intention of confirming the election of Frederick to the Archbishopric and that Denmark's influence in Germany was generally on the decline. At the moment that a Saxon princess was being married to Prince Christian, John George of Saxony was entering on peace negotiations with the Emperor which led to

CONFERENCE OF MÜNSTER

the Treaty of Prague of 1635. This act of treachery against the Evangelical cause weakened the position of Sweden in Germany, which would have been infinitely worse had it not been for the alliance with France. With the Treaty itself Denmark could find little fault, though Christian continued his advances to the Emperor in order to clarify the position of Duke Frederick in Bremen which was only reservedly recognised by the Emperor.

What Sweden had lost she regained partially by her Treaty with Poland of the same year, which extended the Truce of Altmark for another twenty years. She had then her troops free for another venture in Germany and, under her great generals John Baner and Lennart Torstensson, started on her victorious course. In the fear that Sweden, unless immediately restrained, would gain the whole of Pomerania besides winning other advantages in Germany, Christian renewed his overtures to the Emperor, offering to recognise the Treaty of Prague in return for the recognition of the Danish position in Bremen. The Danish Council did its utmost to dissuade Christian from committing himself to an agreement which would involve the country in a war with both France and Sweden.

The question of Pomerania became a burning one at the beginning of 1637 when the Duke died and the succession to the Duchy could be disputed by Sweden, Brandenburg, or a member of the Pomeranian House. In his determination that it should not be Sweden at any cost, Christian returned to his former rôle of peacemaker, though with no more success. Nor did it augur well for the success of a peace conference summoned at Münster in 1642 that, immediately before its opening, Christian blockaded Hamburg and forced it to acknowledge him as its overlord. Undeterred by this incident, the conference, after many postponements, reopened its sessions at Münster and Osnabrück in the autumn of 1643. The Danish delegates were apparently instructed to work for the return of Germany to the same position as she held before the Thirty Years' War : first and foremost they were to prevent Sweden from acquiring Pomerania. Before the conference actually opened the Danish and German delegates were holding

PRELUDE TO WAR WITH SWEDEN

a secret conference in Osnabruck. The Emperor only gave a half-hearted reception to the Danish proposals for a joint attack on Sweden. Meanwhile a Swedish army under Field-Marshal Torstensson was on its way north from Austria. Nobody knew why.

In reviewing the causes of the war that was shortly to open between Denmark and Sweden, it must not be forgotten that it was not Denmark's opposition to Sweden's designs on Germany which supplied the *leit motif*. At that time Sweden was flushed with her victories in Germany, but her ambitions did not rest there. Oxenstjerne shared the feelings of most of his countrymen that Denmark must be laid low before peace could be secured in the North. Christian's obstinate policy only hardened these feelings, nor did he neglect any opportunity of interfering in the internal affairs of Sweden. When Maria Eleonora, the widow of Gustavus Adolphus, quarrelled with the Swedish Regency and fled the country, Christian allowed Danish ships to escort her to Falster.

It could not be said that Christian was blind to the coming dangers. As always, the Council of State discouraged any addition to the defence force. The King appealed to it in vain to give assistance to Poland and Russia, the natural enemies of Sweden. But there was one power, the Netherlands, which, if astutely handled, might have been won over to the Danish side. Their alliance with Sweden had expired in 1629 and had not been renewed. The moment had now come when Sweden and not Denmark was the chief menace to their trade in the Baltic. It was a misfortune to Denmark that Christian, by a number of foolish acts, drove the Netherlands into the arms of the enemy. As usual, the crucial point in the relations of Denmark with the States-General was the Sound dues. Here again one sees Christian allowing his personal pride to override all political restraints. The raising of the Sound dues to the treble of their former figure was more than the Netherlands could stand, and the final straw was the conclusion by Denmark of a commercial agreement with Spain. The natural result would have been a breach of peace: instead Sweden and the Netherlands renewed in 1640 their former alliance. The possibility of an amicable agreement

SWEDISH INVASION OF HOLSTEIN

with Holland was ruined by the one-sided policy of Denmark.

For the Swedish Government it was only a question of time before a war began with Denmark. They judged it wiser to take the initiative than to await an attack. Sweden could now attack, not only from the east, but through the Peninsula. It was from a Danish resident in Stockholm, Peder Vibe, that Denmark received the first warning. On the 12th December 1643 Torstensson, then a sick and weak man, led his forces across the frontier of Holstein. Within a week the whole province was in his power : only Glückstadt and Krempe held out. From his headquarters in Haderslev, Torstensson collected his boats for an attack on Funen. As in the war against the Emperor, everyone fled who could ; the noblemen from their estates and the bourgeois from their towns. In all this confusion the only man to stand firm was Christian IV, who hastened to assemble his forces and arm the fleet. Hannibal Sehested was given the command in Norway ; the Scanian provinces were defended by another son-in-law, Ebbe Ulfeld, and Anders Bille was placed in command in Fünen. The King's son Frederick was appointed generalissimo in the Duchies, but the chief command was taken over by the King in person.

It was fortunate for Denmark that the Swedish attack on Scania under Field-Marshal Gustav Horn only began two months after Torstensson had entered Holstein. The Danish islands would have been much more exposed if the two attacks had been delivered simultaneously. Helsingborg, Lund and Landskrona fell easily to Horn's army, but neither of the important fortresses of Malmö or Kristianstad could be subdued. The fight east of the Sound resembled guerrilla warfare. So long as Norway could hold at bay the Swedish army in Jemteland, there could be no question of an invasion of Zealand. Also the Swedish army in the Peninsula was kept at bay. Courageous sorties were made from Glückstadt and Krempe, and the freemen of Holstein harassed the enemy's quarters. In the end Torstensson was forced to abandon his plan of invading Fünen.

At the outset of the war both Denmark and Sweden were

looking around for foreign help. The late negotiations at Osnabrück between Denmark and Germany had not been wasted, for the Emperor was giving orders to Field-Marshal Gallas to go to the assistance of the Danes in Holstein. For a long time it was uncertain on which side the Netherlands would stake their fortunes. Although the sympathies of the Stadtholder and the House of Orange were on the side of Denmark, they could not restrain Holland from sending a whole flotilla under Admiral Thijssen to the aid of Sweden.

Despite this new menace, Christian IV decided to make a direct attack on Sweden. He planned an attack on Gothenburg and Elfsborg by land and sea. Hannibal Sehested was to advance on Götaälven, and Christian himself sailed from Copenhagen with 10 warships. While Sehested was investing Gothenburg from the north, the fleet was blockading the town from the western side. But these operations were abruptly checked by the news of the approach of the Dutch fleet. On the 16th May the two fleets faced one another off the west coast of Schleswig and after a stubborn fight Thijssen's fleet was forced to retreat. Another Danish fleet inflicted in the same month heavy losses on a combined Swedish-Dutch fleet. But the seas were not yet freed from the Swedish main fleet commanded by Admiral Klas Fleming, which sailed from Stockholm at the beginning of June with orders to transport Torstensson's troops to Zealand, to take possession of Kronborg and thereafter turn on Copenhagen. At the end of a day's fight off Kolberg Heath, in which Christian lost an eye and many of his officers were killed or wounded, the fleets separated and the Swedish fleet withdrew to Kiel. A memorable sea-battle was ended without either side being able to claim the victory. A few days after the battle the Danish fleet lay outside Kiel Harbour, but the Swedish fleet, taking advantage of a favourable wind, soon made its escape and sailed peacefully past the enemy.

This was not the only misfortune that attended Christian. The invasion of Holstein by Gallas had been a mere farce. The only point in Denmark's favour was that Torstensson, in pursuing Gallas into Germany, had left the Peninsula free. The relief was only temporary. A little later 10 Swedish

TREATY OF BRÖMSEBRO

regiments commanded by Helmuth Wrangel entered Holstein and within a short time the whole province lay at his mercy. Christian had at least the satisfaction that the islands were no longer exposed to an attack from Jutland. He had evidently not reckoned on the return to life of the Dutch fleet. In July 1644, 22 warships under the command of Thijssen passed unhurt through the Sound in order to unite with the Swedish main fleet. Denmark at the moment had divided her fleet, and could only put to sea 17 ships against the 40 of the enemy. It could have been foreseen that, when the two fleets joined battle on the 13th October, the Danes would be completely defeated. Only 3 Danish frigates returned to Copenhagen. Although the immediate results of this misfortune were not so serious as might have been expected, the moral effect was overwhelming. It helped little that Norway had withstood heroically and with success all Swedish attempts to break her loyalty to Denmark.

The hope gone of any help abroad and with little prospect of being able in his reduced circumstances to drive the enemy from his lands, Christian decided to accept the peace overtures made by France and Holland. A Conference opened at Brömsebro on the 8th February 1645, and was attended by Oxenstjerne and Corfits Ulfeld. The Treaty of Brömsebro which was signed on the 15th August degraded Denmark to a secondary position in the North. As a guarantee of peace Halland was ceded to Sweden for thirty years, and she also obtained the islands of Ösel and Gotland and the Norwegian provinces of Jemteland and Herjedalen. The Swedes abandoned their claim for the control of the Sound; the Elbe dues were abolished both for Sweden and Holland, and the question of Bremen was left to the decision of Queen Christina.

The last three years of Christian's government were the most tragic in Danish history. The Treaty of Brömsebro had paralysed the Danish monarchy. Wherever he cast his glance, the scene appeared dark and despairing. Power was slipping from the hands of a man who had never lost faith in his country's destiny. What characterised most these three unhappy years was the lack of common responsibility and common sentiment. "Class stood against class, man against man." The King's

WANING INFLUENCE OF COUNCIL OF STATE

relations to the Council of State, never too good, were now completely stranded. Not that the Council was in full control of the situation. The power of the Provincial and National Assemblies, already discernible in the time of Frederick II, had now become a living reality. The Council of State had also outlived itself. The administration of the land demanded the services of men of a higher quality than was the case a century before.

The position of the Council of State was both strengthened and weakened during Christian's last years. While it usurped many of the royal functions, the mere widening of its powers exposed it to attacks from all sections of the community. The meetings of the National Assemblies, though summoned for the primary object of sanctioning laws and ordinances, served also as a platform for the airing of public complaints and grievances. The representation of the land was no longer confined to a Council composed of a few prominent noblemen. The higher nobility was also a disunited class and, to add to the confusion, the smaller nobility did not feel that they were properly represented in the higher offices of government and demanded and obtained a greater share in the administration. But the initial experiences of an "Institution of Land Commissioners," which was founded in 1638 on the initiative of the nobility to control the expenditure of the collected taxes, only served to prove that the country was not yet prepared for a system of local government.

With ever-increasing bitterness Christian complained of his Council and the unwillingness of the nobility to help him, particularly with money. None of the nobility aroused in him greater wrath and displeasure than Corfits Ulfeld and his sons-in-law as a whole. From the moment he became High Steward, Ulfeld aimed at being the highest power in the land and restricted the powers of the King on every possible occasion. Disagreement between them was not only of a political nature. The King, who had upbraided Ulfeld soundly after the signature of the Treaty of Brömsebro, dare not, however, part with his services. During the war and after, the children of Kristine Munk and Vibeke Kruse never ceased to quarrel. Vibeke's influence with the King was unchanged

AGREEMENT WITH HOLLAND

and was even strengthened by the betrothal of her daughter Elizabeth to General Klaus Ahlefeldt, a noble of Holstein. Only when Hannibal Sehested took up the cause of his mother-in-law was she allowed by Christian to be visited by her daughters. Sehested was as much favoured by the King as he was detested by Ulfeld.

To Christian it was all important that he should win back the diocese of Bremen for his son Frederick and make friends with France and Holland as a counter-weight against Sweden. A Treaty of Friendship had already been concluded with France in 1645. Corfits Ulfeld, who for many years had supported the anti-Dutch policy of the King, now turned in the opposite direction. True it was that, contemporary with the Treaty of Bromsebro, the Swedish-Dutch alliance had been extended by forty years ; but Holland saw in Sweden a greater menace to her trade than in Denmark. When Ulfeld, after being reconciled to the King, set off for Holland in June 1646 to negotiate a pact of friendship, he could not have foreseen the troubles that were brewing in that country. It took him a year before he was able to conclude an agreement which pledged Holland to pay an indemnity for the unpaid Sound dues. Although the agreement brought no other results, it prepared the ground for more amicable relations between the two countries which were to set their mark on later years.

If Ulfeld had thought that he would return from Holland with augmented prestige, he was to be grievously disappointed. The King was angered at the enormous expenditure on the visit which had been conducted with royal splendour and had not, in Christian's opinion, brought proportionate results. During his absence the already humiliated Kristine had incurred further royal displeasure for using offensive remarks against Vibeke. After a frivolous trial Kristine was sentenced to imprisonment and to be deprived of her estates, one of which, and the most important one, was bestowed on Klaus Ahlefeldt.

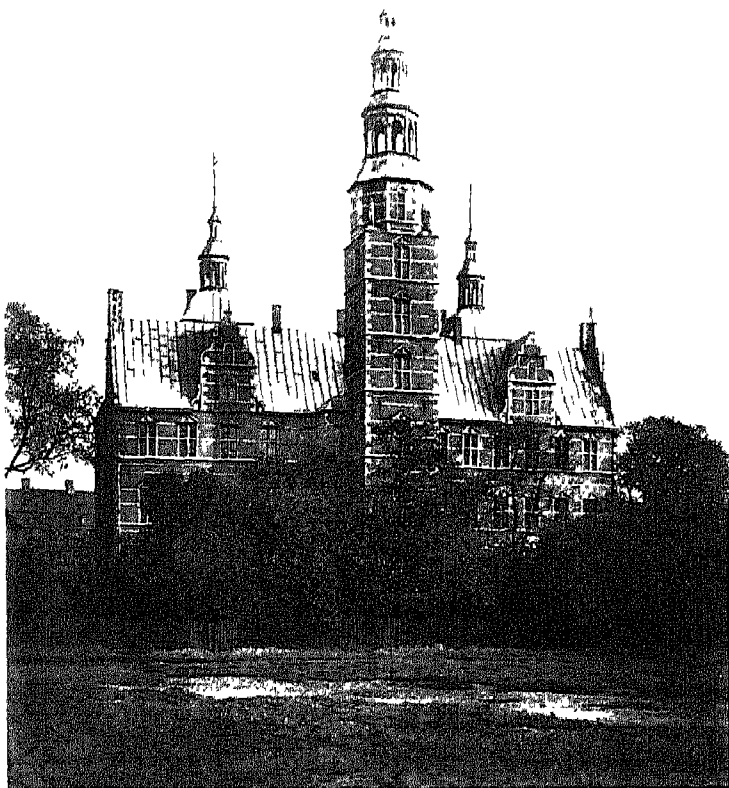
The two men, Corfits Ulfeld and Hannibal Sehested, with their equally great gifts, might have served their country well if they had worked in unison and had not sacrificed their patriotism to self-interest. As reformer and administrator

IIANNIBAL SEHESTED IN NORWAY

Sehested stood above all his Danish contemporaries. His government of Norway marked a new page in her history. He entered into the soul of the country, travelled from end to end of it, administering justice and summoning meetings of the assemblies. A postal service was instituted and many new roads were built. He took the greatest interest in the defences of the land, but all his actions seem to have been inspired by the one thought, that of obtaining for the country and himself an independent position within the State. In all his far-reaching plans he could always count on the King's approval. With a toleration unusual in those days he welcomed foreign merchants and foreign capital. One of the King's last acts was to allow half of the Norwegian taxes to remain in the country for the payment of the National Debt and of the expenditure on defence. Sehested was not without reaping the reward of his beneficial labours. In 1647 he was given the important fief of Akershus and therewith an annual income of 40,000 riksdaler.

It followed of itself that Sehested's activities should arouse the ill-will of the Danish nobility, who regarded them as an attempt to separate Norway from Denmark. Ulfeld did not neglect the opportunity of taking up a fight against Sehested, backed, as he was, by the majority of the smaller nobility. Christian's health was now failing, and at this moment there came to him the news of the death of his eldest son, Christian. The Council of State could have wished for no successor more suitable to their ends than this weak and pleasure-loving prince. They were afraid of Duke Frederick, whom they knew to be a friend of the common people. The King was suffering from most of the infirmities of old age and from the wounds of Kolberg Heath as he passed away on the 21st February 1648 at Rosenborg in the presence of his favourite daughter, Leonora Kristine. One of his last acts was to give Kristine Munk her liberty.

Christian's character was not free from contradictions. So often his actions challenged his own convictions. He was a regular churchgoer though dissolute in his private life, as great in war as he was weak in government. But these opposites made him the typical representative of the time in which



ROSENBERG CASTLE

CHARACTER OF CHRISTIAN IV

he lived. Notwithstanding all his failings, the picture that the nation had formed of him on his accession was a very different one at the time of his death, when naught but the fine side of his nature was cherished and revered: his good-heartedness, his wittiness, his personal bravery and, most of all, the inborn simplicity that made him the equal of all. He could be seen driving the workman's plough or sitting in his wagon, and mounting a church steeple to see to its repairs. Owing to his simplicity of mind, he was wont to lose himself in the smaller things of life. Entries of the following kind would appear in his diary.

The lamplighter's wife, who is 22, has just had twins. He is 88. I intend investigating the matter.

An elephant arrived in town which could dance, fight and kneel. Also the two Dutch ambassadors, who could do nothing.

One of the Princes was taken ill and my wife had two stomach aches.

Must see that the nurse I have dismissed does not scratch the face of the new one.

But it was in the King's public life that his inconsistencies were the most glaring and costly, even if it be allowed that it was in no way an easy task to run in double harness with the Council. Without a doubt his sympathies leaned towards the middle classes, though he missed early in his reign the opportunity of using them and the Provincial Assemblies as a counterpoise to the powers of the Council and the nobility. While striving hard to rid himself of the Council, he shrunk at the same time from the prospect of replacing it by popular representation. It seemed incompatible with his nature to explore new avenues, but his determination to follow his own line spelled disaster for Denmark. Both the wars of 1611 and 1625 were begun without the Council's approval. When the King's strength failed him after the second of these wars, the Council regained the upper hand. It may be said of Christian that his errors in statesmanship were more harmful to his country than his errors in military strategy. One can only conclude that the King, whose character was steeped in his own times, thought it the easiest task to leave alone the nobility who were still the highest in the land. Their strength

CHRISTIAN'S POPULARITY

did not, however, tally with their outward grandeur. On the other hand, there was all the difference between the élite of the nobility, who had travelled and studied abroad, and the common nobility, who were uncultivated and dissolute. Both burghers and peasants were in silent revolt against the powers that be. But the burghers of Copenhagen alone represented a force that was capable of taking a lead in the uplifting of their own class.

Christian IV is enshrined in the hearts of the Danes as the greatest monarch that ever ruled Denmark. They remember him as the sailor King who, in the thick of battle and with one eye lost, ordered his men to carry on and fight to the last. It did not lessen his popularity that he should have lived at the same time as Gustavus Adolphus, who was undoubtedly his superior.

CHAPTER XIV

TWO months passed after the death of Christian IV before Frederick III was elected his successor by the Council of State, though only under pressure from the Provincial Assemblies. Within these two months the Council, with Ulfeld at its head, arrogated to itself new privileges and more drastic powers than it had ever previously enjoyed. Frederick was a very different type to his father. From his earliest days he lived the life of a recluse, training his mind in literature, science and art. He spoke little and wrote less. Clever and calculating, he was awaiting his time and was careful to conceal his plans. Unlike his father, he knew how to control his feelings and, though no fighter, kept a cool head when he followed his father in the Thirty Years' War. On the other hand, there was in him the fantastical vein that could at times lead him to imprudent decisions in matters of high policy. He had married in 1642 Sophie Amalie, the daughter of Duke George of Brunswick-Lüneburg, who inherited from her father a restless and passionate temperament. Energetic, ambitious and pleasure-mad, she hated the Danish nobility and the talented Leonora Kristine. The following years were to witness a struggle for power between Ulfeld and his wife and the new royal couple, who had on their side a more skilful intriguer in Hannibal Sehested.

No Danish king ever signed a more humiliating Capitulation than did King Frederick III. But it was also the last. The lower classes were filled with the greatest ill-will against the nobility and with the greatest sympathy for Frederick, which was of some consolation to a hand-bound king who viewed his position with dismay. The scene where the King first gained a sense of independence was placed in the Duchies. When Christian Rantzau succeeded in introducing in the Duchies a statute which established the right of primogeniture, Frederick

DOWNFALL OF CORFITS ULFELD

felt that he had reached the starting-point toward absolute and hereditary monarchy, for which he pined. It is significant that this principle found an echo amongst some of the nobility, and the example of other European countries gave it greater force and meaning.

What catches the eye most in these years are the relations between the King and Ulfeld. Frederick was leaving to the Council the ignominy of burdening the country with new taxation against which the Municipality of Copenhagen, for the first time in history, raised its head. Also Ulfeld was allowed—to his own undoing—to assume the responsibility of negotiating a defensive alliance with Holland. In spite of Swedish opposition, he succeeded in signing a Treaty of Defence under which the attacked party was provided with a force of 4,000 men. Holland also agreed to pay 140,000 riksdaler yearly in place of the regular Sound dues. This was substantially more than the dues had brought in in recent years. Though it was one of Ulfeld's greatest achievements, his enemies inside the Council had made use of his absence to undermine his position as High Steward, and the King was infuriated over the expense of the Mission. Ulfeld played the old game of threatening to resign his office in the confident hope that during his absence the machinery of government would go to pieces. Much to the King's regret, he was forced at the same time to part with Hannibal Sehested, who was found to have embezzled a large amount of the taxes paid during his administration of Norway.

The downfall of Ulfeld, though it was foredoomed, was hastened by the appearance on the political stage of one Colonel Walter, who was known to the Danish Court for his brave defence of Rendsborg in 1645. Walter availed himself of a connection with a woman named Dina Vinhofer to spread the lie that Ulfeld and Leonora Kristine were planning an attempt on the King's life. Both the King and Ulfeld were in fear of their lives. Priests from their pulpits prayed for the safety of the Royal Family, the Castle was closely guarded and the guns were placed in readiness. Arraigned before a court, Dina betrayed herself by such a mass of contradictions that she was sentenced to death. Before judgment fell, she touched

INCOMPETENCY OF COUNCIL

Ulfeld on the shoulder and shouted : " You are the father of my child." Colonel Walter escaped with a sentence of banishment. When threatened with an enquiry into his management of the State's finances, Ulfeld left secretly with his wife and children and only returned as a traitor under the banner of Charles X of Sweden. With Ulfeld fell from grace all the sons-in-law of Kristine Munk, with the exception of Hannibal Sehested. Despite his late offence he was granted an annual pension by the King and served abroad as a general of artillery in the Spanish army, awaiting the moment when Denmark's misfortunes would make his return indispensable.

The most important outcome of the years that preceded the war with Sweden of 1657 was the gradual liquefaction of the nobility as the dominant class in Denmark and the proved incompetency of the Council of State to direct affairs. Joakim Gersdorf, the new High Steward, though a highly gifted man, possessed none of the energy and decisiveness of his predecessor Ulfeld. At a time when the finances of the country were in a sorry plight and the King's brave efforts to improve the defences of the country were foiled by the apathy of the nobility, Denmark had reason to regret that she was without a leader. There was no doubt that the incompetence of the Council was in many ways injurious to the State, but it was no less an advantage to the King. It was no wonder that the influence of the German advisers, already great, immensely increased in these years. There also flocked to the Court many other Germans who were accepted into the Danish nobility, and many of the younger Danish nobles were drawn to the King by sympathy. The central figure of the Court was Sophie Amalie, who, despite the financial straits of the land, thought of nothing but fêtes and ballets. To escape from the importunities of the Council, the King transferred his Court to Flensburg for one whole year.

Frederick, while keeping his hand off internal affairs, was all the time taking an active interest in foreign politics and winning the confidence of the nation essential to his aim of regaining his lost German provinces. Divisions of opinion only appeared when finance raised its ugly head. It was to the misfortune of Denmark that in such difficult times she had

WAR WITH SWEDEN

no statesman that could be placed on a level with men like Charles X of Sweden, Jan de Witt and Oliver Cromwell. The recent alliance with the Netherlands was to be the first reminder to Denmark of her foreign commitments. It came to her when war broke out in 1652 between England and the States-General, and the latter applied for help. Danish squadrons covered English ships in the Sound and the Kattegat and, in a Treaty of 1653, the Danish Government agreed to forbid the transit through the Sound of all English ships. The war was over in the following year and was of little significance to Denmark. Only two events stand out as playing their part in the future. Jan de Witt became Grand Pensioner of the Dutch State, and Oliver Cromwell assumed power in England as Lord Protector. Sweden became the centre of interest when Christina renounced in 1654 her throne and was succeeded by the intrepid and ambitious Charles X.

Poland, because she made no secret of her desire to reconquer Livonia, was the first object of Swedish aggression. At the beginning Charles met with every success and seized nearly the whole of the country, but in 1656 there came a change. The downtrodden Poles revolted against their oppressors and the Netherlands grew anxious that Sweden might utilise her conquests to place further hindrances in the way of Baltic trade. The visit of a Dutch mission to Copenhagen pointed to a closer alliance between Denmark and the Netherlands, but all hopes fell to the ground when the Dutch Government began negotiating instead with Sweden. In the same year (1656) Sweden and Brandenburg together won a great victory over the Poles at Warsaw. It is amazing that at such a moment the King of Denmark and his advisers held to the belief that Sweden's die was cast. The only causes for optimism were vague promises from Holland and the news from Vienna that the Emperor was ready to take up arms in order to restore to Sweden's enemies their former possessions. The hatred of Sweden and the thirst for vengeance were the feelings that acted most on the minds of the Danes as they prepared for war. In February 1657 a meeting of the National Assembly at Odense voted for war by a large majority without weighing

CHARLES X INVADES HOLSTEIN

the consequences. In Vienna the peace party was the stronger and de Witt's policy was one of reserve.

The Danish Government had planned to attack Sweden from three sides, from Norway, Scania and Holstein, though, at the time war was declared, no battle orders had been given. At the end of June Anders Bille was given the command in Holstein. Attached to him was a Council of War which consisted of Holstein noblemen! After waiting a few weeks at Oldesloe, Bille went with part of his force across the Elbe to conquer Bremen. The only success achieved was the capture of Bremervörde. A little later Charles, who was delighted at a declaration of war that called him away from the volcanic soil of Poland, moved into Holstein at the end of July 1657 with an army which was infinitely stronger than the Danish army. The Danish Government, who had not expected an attack from the south, left Anders Bille to decide whether he would return to Holstein or would remain in the district of Bremen. Seeing dangers ahead, Bille left only a small force in Bremen and concentrated his main strength in Holstein. While General Wrangel occupied the whole of Bremen with the exception of Bremervörde, Charles entered Itzehoe. His brother-in-law, the Duke of Gottorp, had already given him the secret promise of assistance in the event of a war with Denmark in the hope of thereby extending his territory and shaking off his vassalage to the Danish crown. Despising the fortified places of Glückstadt and Krempe, Charles moved northward across the Schleswig border and took up his headquarters at Kolding. He did not expect to find the enemy strongly entrenched in Frederiksdodde.

Meanwhile east of the Sound the Danish and Swedish forces were fighting for the possession of Halland. The Danes, under Aksel Urup, were defeated at Genevads Bro. A month later Frederick gained a victory over the Swedish general, Gustav Stenbock, near Laholm. At the same moment the Norwegian army under Iver Krabbe was being driven out of North Halland. At sea, however, the Danes were more fortunate. After a three-days' fight in the waters between Möen and Falster the Swedish fleet commanded by Klas Bjelkenstjerna was forced to withdraw to Wismar.

CAPTURE OF FREDERIKSODDE BY THE SWEDES

The indecisive results of the first months of the campaign, added to the financial embarrassments of Denmark, might have ended the war if the political outlook had not suddenly brightened. Of chief importance was the conclusion of an alliance between Poland and Denmark whereby a Polish army was to invade Pomerania, and both powers agreed not to conclude peace without mutual consent. At the same time an Austrian army advanced into Poland, drove the Swedes out of Cracow and threatened Prussia. In the autumn Frederick William, the Elector of Brandenburg, deserted Sweden for Poland and was promised the naval support of Frederick in his efforts to conquer Swedish Pomerania.

In this atmosphere the Danish Government gave a cold reception to the peace proposals presented by Corfits Ulfeld in the name of the Swedish Government. After this rebuff Ulfeld joined Charles X in his campaign and made an appeal to the Jutish nobility to rise against the "tyrannical régime" of Frederick III. But Ulfeld was not long in discovering that peace was more suitable to his ends and Sweden's European allies were also pressing for peace: France, because she needed the help of Charles X against the Hapsburgs; England, because she feared that Denmark would draw too near to Austria and the Catholic lands of Europe. Charles X was offering North Jutland to Cromwell and to his father-in-law in Gottorp the district of Vejle in North Schleswig and the island of Fünen. The rest of Denmark he would keep to himself. The Netherlands steered clear of any immediate entanglements. In his perilous situation, Charles X took the daring decision to capture Frederiksodde by storm and consigned the task to General Wrangel. On the night of the 23rd and 24th October the Swedes attacked the ramparts from three fronts. Though the garrison numbered 6,000 men, their resistance was feeble, and within one and a half hours the King's new fortress was in the enemy's hands. More than 1,000 Danes were killed, and amongst them Anders Bille.

The anger and shame at the surrender of Frederiksodde unloosened all the vials of hatred against the nobility. Noblemen and Councillors of State were held up as cowards and traitors, which they were strictly not. Gone was the sacrificial

PEACE OF ROSKILDE

spirit with which the Danes had entered the war. The winter of 1657-8 was the most remarkable in the history of Scandinavia. The cold was so great in December that the Danes were beginning to hope that the forces of nature would prevent a landing of the Swedes in Fünen. It was General Wrangel who decided that his troops should attempt the outstanding feat of crossing the Little Belt on ice. He chose a crossing where the small island of Brandsö gave his army a midway resting-place. With Charles at their head, 10,000 Swedish soldiers crossed to Fünen. Though numerically inferior, the Danes for a moment had the advantage on their side. Two Swedish cavalry squadrons and the King's sledge suddenly disappeared beneath the ice. An attempt, however, to stop the Swedish vanguard miscarried. Threatened in the flank by the King and with Wrangel in front of him, the Danish commander and his whole army surrendered.

With the loss of Fünen, the Danish Government gave up all thought of resistance. While, under pressure from the French and English ministers, Frederick himself was ready to negotiate peace, Charles crossed over the ice to Langeland and thence to Lolland and Falster and the coast of Zealand near Vordingborg. Here he was met by the English and French Ministers together with Gersdorf and Christian Skeel, who had come to negotiate peace. Charles was to decide whether he would be satisfied with nothing less than the subjection to his rule of the whole of Denmark or would content himself with her mutilation. Second thoughts and the supplications of the English and French envoys made him choose the last. Peace negotiations were continued at Taastrup under the watchful eyes of the Swedish army, which stood near by and threatened to attack Copenhagen at any moment. Though peace was signed at Taastrup, it was known as the Peace of Roskilde, for it was here that the Treaty was given final shape on the 26th February 1658. The peace signified the complete annihilation of Danish power in the Scandinavian peninsula. All her former provinces, Halland, Bleking and Scania, became Swedish, as also Bornholm, the only remaining Danish stronghold in the Eastern Baltic. Norway was deprived of the counties of Bahus and Trondhjem. Fred-

A TENTATIVE SCANDINAVIAN ALLIANCE

erick was to hand over to Sweden 2,000 cavalry, to abstain from any alliance inimical to Sweden and to prevent as far as possible any warships from passing through the Sound or the Belt. All goods, Swedish or foreign, carried on Swedish ships should be free from the Sound dues. The only matter left unsettled was the relations of the King to Gottorp.

Fêted as a victor and saluted by the guns of Kronborg, Charles departed for his newly won provinces. He had left an army on Danish soil with the idea of wringing further concessions from Denmark at a later date. In the earliest months of the year England and Sweden were working out a plan for placing Charles at the head of a Protestant movement against the Catholic countries, Poland, Austria and Spain. Charles regarded Austria without valid reasons as his principal enemy, but also foresaw that a war with that country would in all probability cause the Netherlands to side with his enemies. These were the thoughts that were at the back of his mind when negotiations were reopened with Denmark at Copenhagen at the end of March to translate into reality the doubtful clauses of the Treaty of Peace.

Both States had undertaken to abstain from any alliances with other countries and "not to allow any enemy warships to pass through the Sound or the Belts into the Baltic, using every endeavour to prevent it." They both agreed that a Scandinavian alliance needed a common commercial and foreign policy. The point to which the Swedes attached the greatest importance was that Denmark should strictly limit the number of warships required for protecting the entrance to the Baltic. On all other points, Denmark gave way completely. She agreed to the incorporation of the island of Hveen in Scania, and to the inclusion of Romsdalen in Trondhjem, and Frederick III renounced temporarily his feudal rights over the royal parts of Schleswig. But he remained firm in refusing to countenance any fixed limitation in the number of Danish ships guarding the Straits because, in his own words, "The King of Sweden might commit an injustice in the Baltic and then the King of Denmark would be called on to forbid an entrance to all those who would and could avenge the wrong."

SIEGE OF COPENHAGEN

Charles's patience was now at an end. He gave orders to Wrangel to lead the Swedish forces only from Zealand to Fünen and not to leave the island until further orders. He was undoubtedly in the right in claiming that Denmark had violated certain clauses in the Treaty of Peace, but his own demands far exceeded his rights. After a week's conference with his Council, he decided that Denmark, and not Brandenburg, should be the scene of his next campaign. Wrangel received new orders. He was to transport his cavalry from Kiel to Korsör and then to advance on Copenhagen, taking also his infantry from Funen to Zealand. Without a warning or declaration of war, Charles began his attack on Copenhagen.

It was Denmark's good fortune that the vital forces of the kingdom were concentrated within the walls of the capital. A speedy march brought 7,000 Swedes near to its gates. When pressed by his entourage to save himself by flight, Frederick replied, as his father would have done: "I will die in my nest." On the eve of battle he won over the burghers of Copenhagen by satisfying the demands of the Municipality for the freedom and rights enjoyed by the nobility. When Charles, on approaching the city, saw thick clouds of smoke arising above the burning suburbs, he began to lose heart and confidence. He gave up the idea of taking the city by storm and instead laid siege to it. It was ill luck for Denmark that the war opened with the surrender of the fortress of Kronborg, whose commander had been entrapped by a false report studiously spread by Wrangel, who was besieging the place, that Copenhagen was captured and that the King was taken prisoner.

Unshaken by this disaster, the citizens of Copenhagen, led by the King in person, continued their preparations for defence and worried the enemy with continuous sorties. In one of these sorties, in which Frederick himself took part, Charles narrowly escaped capture. The Danes were anxiously awaiting the arrival of a Dutch fleet in accordance with the treaty of mutual defence. This fleet of 35 warships and as many store-ships was only awaiting favourable winds in order to sail for Copenhagen. It entered the Sound on the 29th October and,

FAILURE TO CAPTURE COPENHAGEN

though exposed to fire from the fortresses of Kronborg and Helsingborg, succeeded in dispersing a larger Swedish fleet of 45 ships and in arriving at Copenhagen the same evening. The Swedish King thereupon withdrew to a fortified place near Bronshøj, from where he directed the blockade of Copenhagen.

Meanwhile Sweden was meeting with serious reverses in other parts of Denmark. Her troops met with strong resistance in the islands of Bornholm, Falster and Lolland. The Danes received further comfort from the entry into Holstein of a mixed force representing the Empire, Brandenburg, and Poland. By the end of the year nearly the whole Peninsula was purged of the enemy forces. On the 21st January 1659 Denmark concluded an alliance with Brandenburg, who undertook to continue the war. At the same time the Norwegian militia were driving the Swedes out of Trondhjem. The hopes of obtaining the same success in the Scanian provinces were, however, disappointed. This was not the only blow that afflicted Denmark in these critical days. Neither the Elector of Brandenburg nor Admiral Opdam, who commanded the Dutch fleet, would aid Denmark in an attack on the Swedish forces in Fünen and Zealand. Also the various participants in the defence of Copenhagen lost a sense of their common duty in giving themselves up to sectional disputes. But the old fighting spirit returned when the Swedes on the night of the 10th February 1659 attempted to take Copenhagen by storm. They failed on every side, and, as morning broke, the terrain around the town was covered with thousands of dead and wounded.

It was no fault of the Danes that they failed to take advantage of their victory. All their allies desired peace, and England and France still regarded Sweden as a potential aid against Austria. With little resources outside the capital, the Danes were powerless to prevent the Swedes from reconquering the small islands in the south. But their hopes revived when the English fleet was called home to help Charles II to the throne, and the Dutchmen alone remained on the scene of operations. With the help of a large Dutch fleet commanded by Admiral de Ruyter and the Danish fleet, a combined army of Branden-

PEACE OF COPENHAGEN (1660)

burgers, Austrians, Poles, Danes and Dutchmen, under Field-Marshal Eberstein, was able to enter Fünen. On the 14th November 1659 a large Swedish army was forced to capitulate at Nyborg.

It might be asked why the victors did not follow up their victory by carrying the war to Zealand. The answer was that no army which could be landed there could face the superior forces of Charles, despite the fact that the great war King had decided at this moment to retrieve his fortunes in Norway. Having failed to conquer Halden, Charles was severely defeated by the Norwegian Jörgen Bjelke at the beginning of 1660. Shortly afterwards he was seized with fever and died at Gothenburg on the 12th February.

The battle of Nyborg, the withdrawal from the field of all the allies of Denmark and the death of Charles marked the end of the war. Peace was signed at Copenhagen on the 26th May 1660. Trondhjem and Bornholm were restored to Denmark. On all other points the Peace of Roskilde held good. Only there was no allusion to foreign warships passing through the Sound. By the return of Trondhjem to Norway, she was able to preserve her nationality and her sense of independence.

After the signature of the Peace of Copenhagen, the land and people were—to quote a popular verdict—"in many ways like a wreck." This was certainly true of the country areas through which Brandenburgers, Swedes and Poles had plundered their way. The Danish army was disorganised, her fleet practically destroyed, and her commerce ruined. The National Debt had risen to 3,000,000 riksdaler. Much of the Crown lands were pawned, and State revenues were a small fraction of what they had been in peace-time. A depleted treasury could not even pay the salaries of the Government's servants. The dissensions between the bourgeois and the nobility, though forgotten in the hours of defending the city, gathered in intensity when noblemen were called on to share with the lower orders the financial burdens of the State. But they lacked the strength to put up a long resistance. The Council of State had sunk into insignificance, was without a strong leader, and could not count more than fifteen members. The newly dignified citizens of Copenhagen were also clamour-

AFTERMATH OF PEACE

ing that the privileges accorded to them in their hours of glory should be fully confirmed. The clergy, who before the Reformation had been allied to the nobility, now threw in their lot with the townspeople.

BOOK III
ABSOLUTE MONARCHY

CHAPTER XV

ON the 10th September 1660 a plenary meeting was convoked at Copenhagen to which were invited the representatives of the three classes, noblemen, clergy and bourgeois : only the peasants were not represented. Speaking in the name of the King, Gersdorf appealed to the delegates to furnish money for the maintenance of the Court and of the army, and for the payment of the National Debt, with the clear inference that each class should take its share. When the delegates had been given time to debate the proposal in private and separate meetings, the negotiations were wrecked through the obstinate refusal of the nobility to submit to a duty on food consumption, on the ground that the King himself could not levy any contribution on their class. Events were to prove that the bourgeois and the clergy were more than a match for the nobility when it came to unity of leadership. At the head of the bourgeois movement were the two men who had most earned the King's confidence and gratitude in the late war, Hans Nansen, the burgomaster of Copenhagen, and Thuresen, the commander of the town militia. "Equality for all" was the precept that bound together priest and burgher under the bold leadership of Hans Svane, the Bishop of Zealand, a man of great political ability and a great preacher.

Whilst the nobility and the Council were resorting to every device to save their position, they were suddenly driven off their feet by an event which broke for ever the power of the aristocracy in Denmark. As the King refused to transgress the terms of the Royal Capitulation, the plan was conceived of proclaiming the heredity of the monarchy and of extending the powers of the King. On the 6th October all the bishops, representatives of the clergy in Zealand and deputies from all over the country drew up a document which was to go down in history. It offered to the King the land of Denmark as an

RECOGNITION OF HEREDITARY MONARCHY

hereditary kingdom, as existed in Sweden, England, France and Spain. The only conditions attached thereto were that classes should preserve their privileges and that the King would only make changes in the government of his country that would be "to the honour of God in Heaven and to the benefit and good of the Kingdom." The opposition of the Council to the measure, on which it had not been consulted, proved the greatest stumbling-block. It pleaded that it was not fully qualified to deal with the matter, that it was also outside the competence of the deputies, and that it did not meet with the King's own wishes and, finally, that an hereditary monarchy would create complications with Sweden. Unwont to take vital decisions except under pressure, the King hesitated to accept an offer which was not presented to him by all classes of the people. As the Council and nobility showed no signs of yielding, all gates to the city were closed, the watches were doubled, the town militia was ordered to hold itself in readiness and the higher officers took over the command in all the provinces.

The King had now made his choice. He declared to the Council that, if the nobility continued its opposition, he would allow himself to be proclaimed as hereditary monarch by the priests and burghers alone. The Council as a last resort made the moribund demand that the monarchy should only be inheritable on the male side. The final step was taken at a joint meeting of the Council and all three classes at the Royal Castle on the 15th October. There the nobility finally recognised the principle of an hereditary monarchy on the male and female line, but on the condition of the indivisability of the kingdom and of the recognition of the privileges of the various classes.

Though the main goal had been reached, there remained the equally arduous task of deciding on the form of the new Government. Some demanded the complete abolition of the Capitulation; others demanded that it should be radically altered; others would leave it untouched. As no one could produce a plan acceptable to all classes of the community, the decision was left to the King in person. It was left, however, to the Estates to sign a document which abolished the

“ INSTRUMENT OR PRAGMATIC SANCTION ”

Capitulation. As soon as the new principle of an hereditary monarchy had been publicly proclaimed, the archives of the Council were quietly removed to the Castle. At the same time shape and form were given to the new Government, Gersdorf was appointed High Steward, Hannibal Sehested Royal Treasurer and Reedtz was made Chancellor. A little later Hans Nansen and Hans Svane were rewarded respectively with the Presidency of Copenhagen and the Archbishopric of Zealand. The Councillors of State, those whom the King desired to keep in his service, were made to give the oath of loyalty to an absolute monarchy. The new privileged classes, however, were content to rest peaceably on their laurels and gave a shocking demonstration of their impotence to utilise their new powers. They little dreamt that the meeting of the Estates which they had just attended was to be the last in 200 years.

There exist no records which can account for the adoption of the principle of absolute monarchy in Denmark. A document appeared at the beginning of the following year (1661) under the official title of “ Instrument or Pragmatic Sanction Regarding the King’s Hereditary Rights to the Kingdoms of Norway and Denmark.” Though it appeared to go no further than the preceding act, all the signatories declared on oath that they had thereby surrendered to Frederick III and his heirs the right of succession together with all royal rights, absolute government, and all regalia as an absolute and hereditary sovereign.

The reception by all social classes of the novelty of absolute monarchy was spontaneous. Even the nobility felt little surprise at the loss of their already declining rights, though they deeply resented that they could no longer escape taxation and that their fiefs were being transformed into districts administered by bailiffs (*amtmaend*). Yet not all the privileges of the nobility were taken away. By “ Royal Grace and Favour ” they were confirmed in their rights of seigneurial justice and of freedom from arrest. Other liberties were only guardedly given and could be withdrawn at the royal pleasure. They might be admitted to “ benefices and honourable positions ” if they proved worthy of them. As already stated, the great

INTRODUCTION OF COLLEGES

majority of burghers were content to rest on their new-won privileges, and the enterprising citizens of Copenhagen were too few in number to provide a constitutional framework for the whole country. The class that benefited most by the change was the clergy who were allowed to keep their tithes. They no longer received their orders from feudal masters and henceforth recognised no authority but the bishops.

Hannibal Sehested was the man who most set his mark on this period though he never succeeded in executing his great reformist plans. He had too many enemies. He excelled most of all in the administration of the country's finances. Inheriting an almost empty treasury, he satisfied creditors by awarding them Crown lands. His influence only began to wane when his rival Gabel became President of Copenhagen. The whole administration of the land was centred in the capital. The Danish Chancery, then the most important of government offices, fulfilled the functions of a Ministry of Justice and Education. This was the time when the so-called Colleges (Ministries) came into existence, such as the Treasury, the Admiralty and the War College. The nobility and bourgeoisie were equally represented in these Colleges. They differed from the present-day Ministries in that their heads were responsible to the King and not to a Parliament and that the members of the Colleges voted on the resolutions. As a general rule, the German Chancery had the exclusive control of foreign affairs. The King had his own Cabinet to which pertained the collection of the Sound dues and other revenues. The position of Secretary to the Cabinet was regarded as the stepping-stone to the highest appointments.

Whatever the King willed during this century was certain to please his common subjects who named him God in virtue of his divine inheritance. Taken all in all, the Danish Kings rarely abused the absolute powers conferred on them. But it is equally true that the first of the absolute monarchs gave a very liberal interpretation to his new powers. Frederick did not scruple to give a preference to a German noble when it suited him. In his reign the inroad of German noblemen increased by leaps and strides. Yet, although Sophie was

DEATH SENTENCE ON CORFITS ULFELD

overwhelmingly German, the official language, except in the army, was invariably Danish.

The most typical instance of the King's ruthless methods was his treatment of Corfits Ulfeld. On his return to his country, a disgraced man both in Denmark and Sweden, he was allowed, after a term of imprisonment, to take up residence on his estate in Fünen on condition that he remained there. The ban was removed in 1663 when he was allowed to go abroad on the pretence of taking waters. On arriving at Amsterdam, he again turned traitor in offering to help the Elector of Brandenburg to the Danish throne. The Elector, accepting the offer in good faith, at once conveyed his decision to the Danish Government. The panic-stricken Court ordered the garrison of Copenhagen to stand at attention day and night while the matter was being submitted to the adjudication of the High Court. It duly sentenced Ulfeld to the loss of his honour, life and property: his hand would first be cut off, then his head which would be placed on a stake. As the Government could not lay hands on his person, they executed instead his effigy and razed his house to the ground. On the open place of the Grey Friars a pillar was erected bearing the inscription: "To the eternal shame of the country's traitor, Corfits Ulfeld." A reward of 20,000 riksdaler was offered publicly to the man who delivered his person. All European Governments joined in the hunt. In varying forms of disguise Ulfeld fled from place to place until his health gave way. He died at Neuburg in 1664 and was buried under a false name.

The noble-minded Leonora Kristine, whose mistake lay in a blind devotion to her husband, escaped death but not imprisonment. She betook herself to England in 1663 to recover from Charles II a sum of money which he had borrowed from Corfits in past years. At the time Ulfeld's disgrace was a matter of public knowledge and the Danish Minister in London was ordered to procure her repatriation. On reaching Dover she was arrested and sent back to Copenhagen. No human considerations could spare her the hatred of Sophie Amalie. Placed in prison clothes she was confined to a dungeon in the Blue Tower. Only twenty-two years later,

NORWAY'S CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION

when Sophie died, was she released by the orders of Christian V. Her last thirteen years were passed in Maribo Cloister.

The greatest secrecy attended the preparation of the King's Law governing the hereditary rights of Danish Kings, which was signed on the 14th November 1665 but was not publicly known until the year 1709. According to its provisions, the King was above the law, gave laws, appointed officials, levied taxes and supported the Church. He had, on the other hand, no proprietary rights to the land and was not allowed to intervene in religious matters. Furthermore, he must abide faithfully by the Augsburg Confession. The kingdom must remain undivided and the royal children be given a suitable appanage. The Law, which was to remain in force nearly 200 years, is said to be the only written law in the civilised world which defines princely power as absolute in its furthest consequences.

The introduction of hereditary government and of absolute power led to fundamental changes in Norway's constitutional relations to Denmark. Norway ceased to be a dependency, for the hereditary monarch stood in the same relation to both kingdoms. She was placed on a legal equality with Denmark, united but not subordinate to her. Many Norwegians welcomed the change as furthering their aim to be independent in fact, which they were far from being. Right up to the cessation of the Union in 1814 the administrative centre was Copenhagen, the Colleges were common to both kingdoms and not until 1811 did Norway obtain her own University. On the other hand, it could be maintained in theory that there were two kingdoms, but only one State and one Monarchy. To this must be added the practical difficulties of finding Norwegian men capable of administering the country and of the expense of maintaining a separate machinery. Denmark cannot have been oblivious to the danger of separating the two kingdoms. But fortunately for Norway, Hannibal Sehested was still alive and was able to enlarge on the administrative benefits he had already brought to the country. As in Denmark many of the fiefs were converted into districts. Officials were given fixed salaries and the nobility were made to pay taxes. Most important of all



FREDERICK III

EFFECT OF HEREDITARY MONARCHY ON THE DUCHIES

were the privileges accorded to the merchant towns in 1662 which prevented foreign merchants from obtaining a monopoly of Norwegian trade. The appointment of the King's natural son, Ulrik Frederick Gyldenløve, as Governor of Norway in 1664 not only marked a new epoch in Norwegian history but brought to her greater independence. Under his governorship Norway obtained her own High Court of Justice, from which appeal, however, could be made to the Danish Court. In other respects these were progressive years for Norway. Christiania and Trondhjem greatly added to their population ; Frederikshald obtained the privileges of a merchant town and the timber trade prospered, particularly when England was in need of new buildings after the Great Fire of 1666.

The existing restraints on the King's rights in the royal part of Schleswig and in Gottorp, which were the outcome of recent years, presented only one of the many problems that confronted the Royal House of Denmark. Until 1660 the connection between the Crown and the royal part of Schleswig might be severed for ever if the King's elected heir was not his representative on the male line. Now that the principle of hereditary monarchy had been recognised or, more correctly, the male line had under the King's Law obtained unconditional precedence over the female line, the union with the royal portion of Schleswig was assured. The sovereign rights which Frederick III had acquired in 1658 in his own part of Schleswig and those which he obtained in Denmark in 1660 were united in the same person. But another question might also arise. In addition to the Royal and Gottorp lines, the various younger Sönderborg lines which descended from Duke Hans had hitherto enjoyed the feudal rights to Schleswig, not only in relation to their specially distributed possessions but, at an earlier date, to the whole Duchy if the two ruling lines became extinct on the male side. Was this right still existing after the introduction of hereditary monarchy in Denmark ?

For the moment the eyes of the Danish Government were only directed on Gottorp. Frederick III and Sophie Amalie were both burning to take vengeance on Duke Christian Albrecht for the wrong he and his father had done to them

CLAIMS TO OLDENBURG AND DELMENHORST

in making a secret agreement with Sweden during the late war. As it was beyond the power of Denmark to use force, her immediate policy was confined to the separation of the two sovereign parts of the Duchy by the abolition of the common government and to an exchange of territory by which the King received Femern. Yet it was soon apparent that Christian Albrecht was determined to maintain his old connection with Sweden, for in 1661 he concluded a defensive alliance with that country. An open breach was happily averted.

There remained the important question of the hereditary rights to the counties of Oldenburg and Delmenhorst. The descendants of Christian I's brother Gerard, who had governed these provinces for about 200 years, were nearing extinction as the ruling Count Anton Günther had no heirs. The descendants of Christian I, who now became the rightful heirs, belonged both to the royal line and to the princely lines of Gottorp and Sönderborg. In these difficult circumstances, King Frederick III and Duke Frederick III of Gottorp had already in 1649 signed an agreement with Anton Günther, by which he agreed to recognise them and their feudal heirs as the only persons entitled to the provinces: in return a small part should be reserved for Günther's natural son, the later Count Anton of Aldenburg. The agreement was confirmed by the Emperor, but the Sönderborg family raised objections and later clung to them. In 1663 one of the Dukes of Sönderborg, Joakim Ernst of Plön, united the claims of these two lines in his own person and was able to produce some strong arguments in his support. But Gottorp refused to give in and wanted the matter laid before the Imperial Court.

Denmark therefore chose the more fortuitous path of negotiating direct with the Duke of Plön. She also raised the new question of hereditary rights to the Duchies. The view was taken that Frederick III's female line also had the hereditary right to the royal portion of Schleswig, for which reason Plön should renounce her right to it. It was the first time that the burning question of the hereditary rights of the female line of the Royal House to Schleswig was brought up. The Duke of Plön having refused to commit himself on the

COMMERCIAL TREATY WITH FRANCE

question of the hereditary claim to the Duchies on the female side, Denmark decided to make terms with Gottorp. In an agreement signed at Glückstadt in 1667 most of the controversial questions were laid aside for the time being. The marriage of Christian Albrecht to a daughter of Frederick II which had hitherto been opposed by Sophie Amalie, was happily consummated. The result of Denmark's changing mood was that the relations with Plön became more strained. Joakim Ernst protested to the Emperor against the occupation of the counties by Denmark and the Emperor referred the case to a committee of German Princes who gave no decision. On the death of Frederick the position in the Duchies was open to every possibility.

In the last ten years of Frederick's reign Denmark abstained from taking any active part in foreign affairs. Never free from the Swedish menace, she sought safety in alliance. Most of her former allies, the Emperor, Brandenburg and Poland had left her after the Peace of Copenhagen, and her relations with the Netherlands rested on very weak ground. The defensive alliance and Treaty of Commerce she signed with England in 1661 on the initiative of Hannibal Sehested brought her, as England's partner, into difficulties with the Netherlands four years later. In 1663 Hannibal Sehested signed a Commercial Treaty with France: its secret article compelled Denmark, if war became necessary with Germany for the maintenance of the Treaty of Westphalia, to furnish a substantial military force; if Sweden attacked Denmark France would furnish subsidies but would only be obliged to break off relations with Sweden if an attack took place at the same time as Danish troops were engaged in a campaign in Germany. Denmark thus took a political place at the side of France that had already stood guarantee for Sweden's integrity. It was hoped that Sweden would also be a party to the treaty, in which case both Denmark and Sweden would exercise the same influence in North Germany. But Sweden would brook no intervention in North Germany on the part of Denmark and signed a defensive alliance with England in 1665 at the same moment as England declared war on the Netherlands.

CHANGING ALLIANCES

One can admire the easy consciences of nations who can change their alliances from year to year. Denmark was not directly involved in the Anglo-Dutch war until in 1665 she was invited secretly by the English Minister in Copenhagen to join England. An English squadron had then emerged victorious from an open sea fight with the Dutch and asked permission to destroy a large number of Dutch merchant ships which had taken refuge in the harbour of Bergen. Frederick granted the request, but before these instructions reached Klaus Ahlefeldt, the Commanding General in Norway, the English squadron attacked and was beaten off by Ahlefeldt's guns. The responsibility for this *fracas* rested with Hannibal Sehested who fell into disgrace. There followed an immediate re-shuffling of the diplomatic cards. In February 1666 Denmark sided with the Netherlands against England; but the war was of no consequence and ceased with the Treaty of Breda of 1667. The end of it all was that Denmark's relations with France drew nearer while there was a perceptible coolness in the relations of France to Sweden. When a triple alliance was formed between England, the Netherlands and Sweden as a counterweight to the plans of Louis XIV, Denmark refused definitely to be a party. In 1669 Denmark became reconciled to England without impairing her relations to France: the underlying motive was to separate Charles II from Sweden.

In his last years Frederick's mind wandered more and more in mysticism and alchemy and fell completely under the magical spell of an Italian alchemist named Francesco Borri whose fame had spread throughout Europe. He was summoned to Copenhagen and a laboratory was specially installed for him at the Castle. He became the leading attraction of the Court and lived and entertained as a *grand seigneur*. In his last months the King meditated more and more on the days to come and on the events of the past. After many days of illness he died on the 9th February 1670.

Christian V was the first Danish king to ascend the throne as an absolute monarch. He was then a young man of 24 years, much given to hunting and riding, but not to intellectual pursuits. A strong sense of duty made up for a profound

dislike of official routine. Though a shy and silent person, he was highly sensitive of the importance of his royal mission. He inherited his mother's taste for pomp and gaiety, his father's lust for power, and in many ways he resembled his grandfather. Unlike many of his predecessors, he was intensely Danish in sentiment. He no sooner ascended the throne than he took as his mistress the daughter of his former tutor, Sophie Amalie Moth. His reign began with a bitter struggle for power amongst the great figures of the past reign. The first to be removed from high office was Gabel, who had made enemies of the Queen-Dowager and of Peder Schumacher, a coming power in Denmark, a highly learned man, the author of the "King's Law," and one of the greatest statesmen that Denmark ever possessed. On the disappearance of Gabel, Government rested with Schumacher, Ulrik Gyldenløve and Frederick Ahlefeldt.

Christian had not been many months on the throne before Schumacher was entrusted with the great administrative reforms with which they were both warmly associated. Schumacher was at the same time ennobled under the name of Griffenfeld and was made member of the King's newly created Privy Council. His great ambition was to gather in his hands all the reins of government. As the chief occupation of the Privy Council was foreign affairs, all the foreign archives were transferred from the German to the Danish Chancery which became the office of the Council. Little by little the new body with Griffenfeld as its leading light took command of all public affairs at the cost of the several Colleges. He served his King much in the same way as Wolsey served Henry VIII.

The period of reform opened with revolutionary changes in the composition of the nobility. Until then the incidence of birth was the sole title to the highest positions in the land. Griffenfeld, as a former burgher and now a partisan of absolute monarchy, was determined to uproot this tradition. There was instituted a new noble rank, a Danish high nobility of Counts and Barons, whose elevation to these ranks depended on the size of their lands. The right of primogeniture was introduced in their dependencies: only the eldest child

REFORMS OF GRIFFENFELD

could inherit the estate ; if no heirs, the estate fell to the Crown. The Counts and Barons were released from the payment of tithes and taxes on most of their lands and the nobility as a whole were freed from taxation on condition that they guaranteed the payment of taxes by their farmers. The purpose of absolute monarchy, as interpreted by Griffenfeld, was not to weigh down the nobility but to raise the middle classes to their level. Few, however, of the Danish nobility availed themselves of the privileges of the Counts and Barons, though among the few there were those who belonged to the oldest families such as Mogens Friis, the first Count of Frisenborg, Oluf Rosenkrans and the renowned Jens Juul. As *primus inter pares* of the new order stood Griffenfeld, who was also one of the twenty members of the new Danebrog Order introduced in 1671.

The great and unprecedented change in the economic life of the country which belongs to the first years of this reign was immensely facilitated by the ready response of the nation. The finances of the State, which were in a sorry plight, could only be improved by establishing better order in the administration. What was needed most was the balancing of the State accounts and the lightening, or rather a redistribution of, direct taxation which weighed heavily on the rural population. As the leading classes were specially favoured, the finances could only be balanced at the cost of the lower classes. The taxes of the peasants were therefore lightened at the expense of the townspeople. The economic policy of Griffenfeld therefore brought no relief to the common people in general. On the other hand, he was able to make economies by reducing the number of hired troops and inaugurating in their place a national cavalry of 4,000 men.

The son of a wine merchant and strictly a man of the times, Griffenfeld's tastes as a reformer leaned most towards trade and industry. Concessions were granted to the East Indian and the West Indian Companies. The latter company, in which the King was the greatest shareholder, had almost sovereign powers outside Europe, could conclude alliances in the King's name, and make war on its own. Three Admirals headed a small company which had the sole rights to trade

COMPLICATIONS IN THE DUCHIES

and fishing in Greenland. The almost extinct Commercial College was revived and installed in the Exchange at Copenhagen. There was no thought of interfering with the privileges and monopolies of business concerns, for it would have conflicted with the principles of the times. For the encouragement of industry, foreigners were granted special facilities in the erection of factories, chiefly in Copenhagen. Notwithstanding, the economic improvement did not fulfil expectations, though the number of merchant ships doubled in the years 1670 to 1674.

The more honours were piled on the head of Griffenfeld, the higher grew his ambitions and the deeper his discontent with the diverse branches of the administration. From the time he was made High Chancellor (1673) and one year later Prime Minister through the death of Peder Reedtz, the administrative functions of the Ministers practically ceased to exist. Supreme power lost him the self-control and the sense of proportion that had hitherto governed his actions. Power intoxicated him and vanity and ambition dragged him into dangerous depths.

On the peaceful opening of this reign, Louis XIV was planning the overthrow of the Spanish Netherlands and the annihilation of Dutch trade. The French King, in secretly plotting at the same time to kill the Triple Alliance, was trying to draw England and Sweden to his side. The chief interest of Denmark lay in her relations to Gottorp which were threatened by the revival of the dispute over the succession to Oldenburg and Delmenhorst after the death of Anton Günther, the last ruling Count. The arrangement with Gottorp, which had been promoted by Gabel at the end of the last reign, was discontinued by his successors, Ahlefeldt and Gyldenlöve. In view of the possibility that the decision of the German Court that was then considering the claim of the Duke of Plön might be adverse to Denmark, Ahlefeldt cleverly persuaded the Duke to renounce, in favour of Denmark, his claim to the two counties in return for the bestowal of many grants and estates in Schleswig and Holstein. This act of diplomacy so outraged Christian Albrecht of Gottorp that in vengeance he concluded an alliance with Sweden.

ALLIANCE WITH THE NETHERLANDS

It was the Oldenburg question which dragged Denmark into the vortex of European politics.

Old and still existing alliances meant little to Denmark in the light of new developments in Europe. Louis XIV, in order to further his designs against the Netherlands, was ready to sacrifice his alliance with Denmark for the support of Sweden. The keynote of Griffenfeld's policy was to do all that was possible to separate Sweden and France. Sweden had, after much hesitation, concluded an alliance with France in April 1672 by which she undertook, in return for subsidies, to support Louis XIV in an attack on the German States if they went to the assistance of the Netherlands. This alliance was followed immediately by another between Sweden and England. A month later a French army broke into the Netherlands and William of Orange raised the standard of revolt in a fight for Dutch independence. Europe was on the point of splitting up into two camps. When the Elector Frederick William of Brandenburg joined the Netherlands and signed a defensive alliance with the Emperor Leopold, it was a foregone conclusion that Denmark would also come in. At the same moment the States-General was seeking a renewal of the then expired alliance with Denmark.

On whichever side Denmark aligned herself she exposed herself to the same risks. Christian V had set his mind on fighting the Swedes but a policy of neutrality, in the wise and cautious hands of Ahlefeldt and Griffenfeld, won the day. Notwithstanding, Denmark, in September 1672, entered into a defensive alliance with the Emperor and Brandenburg for the safeguarding of the peace of Westphalia. Scarcely was the ink dry on this agreement than the Emperor and Brandenburg thought better of it and made peace with France. In the meantime the Danish Government had signed a treaty with the Netherlands which committed the latter to heavy subsidies and Denmark to the arming of 20 ships and 10,000 men. This alliance did not compel Denmark to take up arms unless France found another ally, by which was meant Sweden.

European politics developed a new complex in 1673, when

DENMARK JOINS LEOPOLD'S SECOND COALITION

the Emperor Leopold placed himself at the head of a second coalition against Louis XIV. In the following year Denmark was induced to join this coalition of which the leading partners were the Emperor, Spain, the Netherlands, and the Great Elector. Denmark would not be required to enter the war unless a new ally (? Sweden) attacked the allies. In return for subsidies Denmark engaged herself to supply an army of 20,000 men. Any doubts on the issues involved were dispelled when Brandenburg was invaded by a Swedish army commanded by Karl Gustav Wrangel. Denmark had now no alternative but to present herself as a warlike power. A promising omen was the decision of England to separate herself from France and Sweden.

Before Denmark could take up arms, she must first secure her southern frontier against Christian Albrecht of Gottorp who, in his fury over the Oldenburg affair, had promised Sweden an army of 3,000 men which was to attack Denmark from Bremen. Happily for Denmark, the Elector of Brandenburg, in scoring two military successes against Sweden, had placed Christian Albrecht at the mercy of Christian V. The gates of Rendsborg closed on the Duke who was compelled by force to comply with the Danish demands. He was forced to surrender to the King the major part of the Duchies' contributions as well as his arms and fortresses, on condition that he retained Gottorp Castle as his residence. The Duke renounced his alliances with foreign powers, promised to contract no new alliances without the King's approval, and renounced sovereign rights over his portion of Schleswig.

When all seemed ready for a fight and the moment appeared propitious for severing Sweden's connections with the mainland, Denmark delayed for reasons that have never been fully explained, though everything pointed to the irresolution of Griffenfeld. There appears to be greater force in this argument than in the allegation that his matrimonial projects undermined his judgment. He was wavering between two prospective brides: Princess Louise Charlotte of Augustenborg who was sponsored by the Queen-Dowager, and Charlotte de Trémoille who was closely related to the Queen. In justice to Griffenfeld, there was no immediate call on

CAPTURE OF WISMAR

Denmark to begin operations, and in any case she was waiting for Brandenburg to take the lead and decide at which point she should attack. To the disappointment of Griffenfeld, Brandenburg finally arranged with Denmark that the Danish fleet should cut the connections between Sweden and Germany while the Danish main force joined the Elector's army in an attack on Pomerania. In return the Elector offered to surrender Rugen to the King if he himself conquered Pomerania. The plan of Griffenfeld was to capture Bremen and exchange it with Sweden for the Scanian provinces and so placate France. The plan was apparently kept secret from the King. Griffenfeld's fights with the Generals and his underhand intrigues when discovered cost him the royal confidence. Christian V contented himself with administering to him a severe warning, as it was not yet his intention to part with the services of a man whom he still regarded as indispensable.

Not for many years had Denmark and Norway been able to place such an effective force in the field as in 1675. The command south of the Kattegat was given to the German-born Field-Marshal Adam Weyher. While the Danish fleet set sail for the Baltic, a large force entered Mecklenburg to assist the Elector of Brandenburg in subduing Swedish Pomerania. This object having been achieved, Denmark was left free to concentrate all her forces around Wismar. After a siege of many months, which was almost abandoned at one moment but continued at Griffenfeld's intervention, the Swedish commander surrendered but not until he had lost half his garrison.

Now that it had been proved that Sweden was no longer invincible, Griffenfeld turned his back on Denmark's allies and, apparently with the King's approval, entered into secret negotiations with France. The French Government were bent on signing an alliance with Denmark when the war ended. But one of the letters passing between the Danish Minister in France and the French Minister in Copenhagen, which betrayed the plans of an alliance between the two Powers, was intercepted by the allies in Hamburg. This event sufficed to seal finally the fate of Griffenfeld, who had made enemies on every side and whose position was already so undermined

that it only required the smallest pretext to cast him aside. On the 11th March 1676 he was imprisoned in the Citadel of Copenhagen and his case was laid before a Court of Commissioners. Griffenfeld escaped the stigma of a traitor, but not the stain of disloyalty to his sovereign as proved in his private papers. He was sentenced to the loss of his "life, honour and estate." After staging all the preliminaries of an execution, the King let him off with a life sentence.

After Griffenfeld's fall, Christian V declared that he would be his own Prime Minister. This was no more than a gesture, for Frederick Ahlefeldt took over the leadership of the Government. The unity of command under Griffenfeld was broken. Administration was once more divided amongst the various Colleges. Now that the strong hand of Griffenfeld was removed, the Court became a hotbed of intrigues between the Queen, Charlotte Amalie of Hesse, the Mecklenburgers, the King's mistress, and the pacific Ahlefeldt. Intrigue turned most on the question of the continuance of the war. All hope rested on Brandenburg and the Netherlands. Denmark's position on the reopening of the campaign was, however, most favourable. Sweden was enfeebled, not only in a military sense but in her home government. The attack must begin in the Scanian provinces where Sweden was weakest, but it was equally important to obtain a mastery at sea in order to maintain connections between Scania and Zealand.

In April 1676 Niels Juel led the Danish fleet from Copenhagen with orders to attack Gotland. Within three days he had captured the whole island; but he was forbidden to engage the Swedish fleet off Bornholm until the Dutch fleet arrived and her Admiral Cornelis Tromp had taken command of the whole fleet. A battle fought near the southern point of Öland on the 1st June ended in the complete defeat of the Swedes. Two of their largest ships blew up; four others were captured and the rest withdrew to harbour. The victory at Öland was the first important event of the war. It throttled the plans of the Swedish Government and fed the forces of disunion in Sweden. The time had now come to begin operations on land. Ulrik Gyldenlöve crossed the Norwegian-Swedish frontier and took possession of Vänersborg, whence

NAVAL VICTORIES OF NIELS JUEL

he turned on Gothenburg. Whilst a division of the fleet was drawing the Swedes in towards Ysted, the Danish army of 14,000 commanded by the King in person landed south of Helsingborg to the shouts of "Good luck to the King." The town surrendered without opposition, and the Swedes withdrew to Cristianstad. When Landskrona also fell into Danish hands a month later, it was decided to turn the main army on Cristianstad and to blockade Malmö with a small force. Within a short time the whole of Scania was in Danish possession. But an attempt to penetrate the interior of Sweden stirred the slumbering Charles into action and he defeated a smaller Danish army at Fyllebro whilst on its way to join the forces of Gyldenlöve. Nor was this the end. In the coming winter the Danes suffered a defeat near Lund which, in the loss of human lives, was costly to both sides.

The continuation of the campaign depended more than ever on the Danish fleet, which the Swedes were preparing to challenge in equipping squadrons both at Gothenburg and Stockholm. In the month of May 1677 the smaller squadron stole forth southwards to link up with the larger unit. But Niels Juel was on the alert and fell on it near the south of Möen on the 1st June. Most of the Swedish ships were either destroyed or captured and 1,600 men with their Admiral were made prisoners. "At midday he was my guest on board my ship," wrote Niels Juel. In preparation for the greater struggle Niels Juel by superhuman efforts brought the Danish fleet up to a strength not far short of the Swedish. Henrik Horn, the Swedish commander, was a brave man but he had never yet commanded a ship. Despite strict orders from the King that he should not engage the enemy before he had been joined by the Dutch fleet, Niels Juel decided to fight on his own. On the early morning of the 1st July the two fleets stood abreast of one another in Køge Bay facing a strong east wind. One large Swedish ship ran aground and after a long fight 6 other ships were taken by the Danes. As a trained seaman Juel counted on the wind changing to the west. When this actually happened, he broke through the enemy line and cut off 16 ships from the main fleet. No less than 6 Swedish ships lay around the Danish flagship *Christian V*, but in the

TREATIES OF FONTAINEBLEAU AND LUND

end success came to him. All through the night the fleeing enemy was pursued. The Swedish fleet was so damaged that it never showed itself again in the Baltic. The Battle of Køge Bay was one of the greatest sea victories in Danish history. Niels Juel was acclaimed as a national hero and was raised to the highest naval rank. The Dutch admiral, finding himself in disgrace, resigned his command.

Victories at sea, though they protected the Danish coasts against an invader, did not compensate for defeats on land. The Danes lost the battle of Rönneberg near Landskrona on the 14th July 1677, despite the triumph of the Danish right wing led by Christian V. In the following year the Danish garrison was starved out of Cristianstad. Added to these misfortunes political conditions in Europe, particularly the signing of peace between France and her enemies at Nimwegen (1678-9), threatened to deprive Denmark of Wismar, Landskrona, Helsingborg and Gotland which still remained in her hands. It was a vindication of Griffenfeld's policy of alienating France from Sweden and so preserving peace between France and Denmark. Now the tables were turned and Louis XIV could dictate peace terms to Denmark. In a peace signed with France at Fontainebleau on the 23rd August 1679, and with Sweden at Lund on the 26th September, Denmark was compelled to surrender all her conquests. The arrogance with which France treated Sweden no less than Denmark threw them into each other's arms. They even agreed to an alliance which committed them to a common aggressive war, the profits of which would be evenly divided. To cement this reconciliation, the marriage took place between Charles XI and Princess Ulrikke Eleonora which had been deferred on account of the war. One of her three children was the famous Charles XII of Sweden.

The thirty years of peace lasting from 1679 to 1709 were, taken as a whole, a period of retrogression for all the northern countries of Europe. The old coterie of statesmen in Denmark remained in office but began to lose initiative. When the High Chancellor, Frederick Ahlefeldt, died in 1686, the King refused to appoint anyone in his place from fear of inheriting another Griffenfeld. During these thirty years the political stage was

A "NOBLESSE DE ROBE"

dominated by Jens Juel, the brother of the Admiral, who brought to the administration the qualities of high statesmanship and great energy. These same thirty years can be described as the age of a bourgeois bureaucracy: a new *noblesse de robe* came to occupy a place between the nobility and the common people. Born before the coming of absolute monarchy, it grew up under it. Out of it there sprang a ruling clique of reformers, keen and ambitious but also intrigant and corrupt. The only incorruptible body was the Privy Council, in which Jens Juel figured as the only representative of the old nobility. Of the various Colleges, the Treasury alone rose to greater prominence.

The most distasteful aftermath of the war was the appalling condition of the State's finances. While seeking to lighten the condition of the peasants, the King was reluctant to reduce the military estimates on account of his foreign commitments. On the favourable side were the proceeds of the consumption tax, the Sound dues and the subsidies that came to Denmark as the result of the treaty with France of 1683. The most important of the economical measures associated with these years was the valuation of the various land properties in relation to area and the productivity of the land. The initial step was to make a survey of the area of each individual property that was ploughable; the area was then divided into units of 14,000 square ells that were known as a *tønne* of land. The valuation of each *tønne* of land provided the basis for taxation. In spite of these good intentions, the lot of the peasants grew worse in Christian's last years when the price of corn was falling and the Government were exerting greater pressure on the leasehold farmer to take over the landlord's estate. The Danish peasants suffered most from the invasion of the German nobility, who did not hesitate to use the "wooden horse" on offenders.

The Government had reached the conviction that financial progress was only possible if the economic condition of the country was improved. Companies as before were protected by monopolies. A new company was accorded the right to trade with Iceland and the Faroes and to fish in those waters. While the West Indian Company was forced to cede its trade to

another concern, new life was put into the East Indian Company, which prospered particularly under the great European wars of the 'nineties. To supplement home production, foreign skilled labour was made welcome, and it was hoped that the expulsion of the industrial Huguenots from France would drive some of them into Denmark. These hopes were, however, destroyed by the bigotry of the Danish Church. The momentary improvement in trade provided the Government with the opportunity of establishing a naval reserve force which was commanded exclusively by Danes with Niels Juel at its head until his death in 1697. He was responsible for many improvements in the Danish fleet. For the first time mathematical calculations were used in the building of ships and Danish charts came into use.

In the internal government of the country, no measure surpassed in importance the code of laws which had been begun under Frederick III and which, in its final form, was published in 1683 under the name of "The Danish Law of Christian V." It was founded largely on old Danish laws and was therefore a national production. It was more humane in character than any similar laws in European countries. The death penalty was only inflicted on murderers and on persons guilty of *lèse majesté*. It placed all classes equal before the law, but denied to them all privileges that conflicted with the principle of absolute monarchy, as in the disallowance to take a share in the administration of justice and to elect priests and communal officials. The Danish Law of Christian V was, in fact, the written picture of absolute monarchy.

Despite all efforts towards financial recovery, no real progress was made until Christian Sigfred Plessen, a Mecklenburger, entered the Government in 1692. Not only in finance but in foreign policy Plessen played the leading part. Realising that the financial policy of the past was ruining the country, he abolished all extraordinary taxation and helped the towns by revising the customs dues in their favour. All land taxes were united in one. The central point in his policy was to raise loans first of all by strengthening the credit of the country. A tax on interest was introduced for the first time in 1694. Notwithstanding, he had to resort to extraordinary taxes in

PACT OF ALTONA

1699 contrary to all his principles. His administration benefited on the whole less the merchant towns than the landowners and peasants. The lightening of taxation resulted in rising prices for corn. The temporary salvation did not suffice to save the estates of the old nobility, for only those of a certain size were freed from taxation. In the period 1660-90 nearly half of these estates passed into other hands, chiefly the official class and the new nobility. Though the first period of absolute monarchy could point to no definite improvement in an economic sense, Copenhagen was able to hold its own and double its population.

The recent understanding with Sweden, which indicated a new line of foreign policy, faded away with the death of its originator, Johan Gyllenstjerna, and after 1680 Sweden and Denmark were going their own way again. Sweden was drawing nearer to the Netherlands and England, and in 1682 France signed a Treaty with Denmark which assured the latter handsome subsidies. Sweden and France at one moment were on the verge of war, but, as nothing came of it, Denmark could devote her exclusive attention to the affairs of Gottorp. After 1679 the Duke, Christian Albrecht, had recovered his lands and privileges. When, however, the Duke refused to yield on the point of a common government for Schleswig and Holstein, the Danish Government, secure in their alliance with France, declared the annexation of the Gottorpian part of Schleswig to the royal part of Schleswig. Denmark did not improve her case by besieging Hamburg in 1686 for persistently refusing to do homage to the King. Brunswick-Lüneburg, the Emperor and Brandenburg joined in the protests of Christian Albrecht, being equally zealous of their interests on the Elbe. Denmark's position at the time hung on a very elastic thread as her fate was linked with England and France. When James II was ejected from his throne by William of Orange and England returned to the side of the Protestant Powers, Denmark's position became untenable. By the Pact of Altona (1689) she was compelled to return to the Duke his part of Schleswig. The King could only commend the case "to God and time," as he wrote at the foot of his will.

But Denmark was not long confined to a state of sullen resig-

DEATH OF CHRISTIAN V

nation. On the death of Christian Albrecht, his son Frederick IV married the daughter of Charles XI, signed an alliance with Sweden, took Swedish troops in his service and erected fortifications in South Schleswig. This was more than Denmark could tolerate. Danish troops entered Gottorp and destroyed the new redoubts. Tension ran high and a war with Sweden seemed inevitable on the death of Christian V in 1699. His death at this moment was untimely, for he had shown that his grasp of the realities of absolute monarchy was growing with the years. He was on the whole a popular king, and a brave and chivalrous character, but his love of pleasure and his dissolute habits brought him into disrepute. A weak character in his earlier years of sovereignty, he allowed himself to be guided by others, Griffenfeld and his incompetent successors. Then the German influence was more powerful at Court than in the time of his predecessor, though the general decline in the power of the nobility also drove its German members into the background. The King's wife, Charlotte Amalie of Hesse, was more Danish than many persons at the Court.

CHAPTER XVI

THE education of the heir to the throne, Frederick IV, had been grossly neglected and he was kept strictly away from the affairs of government. Yet he was an untiring worker. Like Christian IV he was a lover of detail and would work long into the night over his accounts. When travelling abroad in 1695 he chose as his bride Princess Louise of Mecklenburg-Güstrow. Although the lady was of his own choice, he was not long in transferring his affection to Countess Viereck, the daughter of the Prussian Minister, with whom he contracted a bigamous marriage. As the Countess died shortly afterwards, the nation was spared the scandal of having a king with two wives.

In the first year of his reign, the old-time dispute on the right of the Duke of Gottorp to sovereignty over the ducal portion of Schleswig, a right which had been confirmed in the Treaty of Fontainebleau and later in the Pact of Altona, was revived and became the central point in a war which embraced on one side England, Holland and Sweden as the guarantors of the Altona agreement and, on the other side, the King of Denmark and his allies, Peter the Great and Poland. With very poor equipment, the Danish army entered Gottorp and began the siege of Tönning. It passes the imagination that Frederick IV at this moment should have risked a war with Sweden, whose military superiority was never in doubt. Frederick evidently thought that the Danish fleet would be capable of covering Zealand and Copenhagen against all Swedish invaders, but he was wrong in reckoning with the support of the Saxon and other princes. His position was all the more threatened when an Anglo-Dutch fleet succeeded in uniting with the Swedish fleet at Landskrona. The young commander of the Danish squadron had orders only to fight if necessary. Later young Charles XII, under cover of the

AGREEMENT OF TRAVENTHAL

ships, landed with his army in Zealand and advanced towards Copenhagen. But before he could bring up sufficient guns to reduce the city, the unexpected happened. Owing to the threatening state of Europe, Denmark's adversaries, as well as Denmark herself, needed peace in the North and it was only demanded of Denmark that she should fall in with the wishes of Gottorp. Sweden was compelled against her will to sign an agreement at Traventhal Castle in Holstein (August 1700) which allowed the Duke to build fortifications and to maintain an army. His sovereign rights in the Duchy were confirmed and Denmark gave an undertaking to Sweden that she would abstain from further hostilities.

The war had brought home to Frederick the pressing need of building up a force adequate to defend the capital and the southern frontier. Six months after the signature of the Peace of Traventhal he restored the land militia which had been abolished by his father since 1679. Military service was to last six years and, from fear of injuring agriculture, was of the mildest kind. Soldiers were exercised for two hours on Sunday after church service. To escape this new imposition, many of the peasants fled over the frontier or hid themselves to avoid conscription. At all events the establishment of a militia was a valuable achievement and it fulfilled its purpose. To make peace with the peasants, Frederick abolished the following year the obligation for the peasants on the islands of Zealand, Lolland, Falster and Møen to take over farms on the estates of the nobility. This liberty was given to all peasants born after his accession, whilst the remainder could buy their freedom for a small sum. This concession contributed more than all else to the popularity of Frederick IV which he enjoyed through his lifetime.

It needed little perspicacity to foresee that peace would be of short duration and that Gottorp would once again be the centre of disturbances, but the break came sooner than expected. Duke Frederick IV, when fighting for Charles XII, was killed by a Polish bullet in 1702. As the Duke's son, Charles Frederick, was only 2 years old, the government of the Duchies was exercised by the Dowager Duchess, Hedvig Sophie, a sister of Charles XII, and by the brother of the dead Duke,

ANOTHER WAR WITH SWEDEN

Christian August. The members of the Gottorpien Council and Regency, being unhappily divided in their sympathies towards Denmark and Sweden, used the occasion to quarrel over such trivial matters as the Bishopric of Lubeck to which Christian August aspired whilst the King possessed a candidate in his brother Charles. Also the two States were unable to agree whether the name and title of the Duke appearing in legislative documents should be written in as large letters as those used by the King of Denmark. On this small account, no Landdag was held in the Duchies for eight years. In the middle of these discussions the thunder cloud of Charles XII's defeat at Poltava broke over Gottorp. As a consequence Gottorp agreed to the practical extinction of her Landdag and to the observance of the strictest neutrality in relation to Sweden.

The Battle of Poltava roused to action all the enemies of Sweden. It is remarkable that Frederick should have chosen the years 1708 and 1709 for a long sojourn in Italy because, at the time of his departure, the power of Sweden was already on the decline. The tragic consequence of his long absence was that the chance of concluding an alliance with Russia and of obtaining subsidies was gone by the time of his return. When the Czar did finally decide to join hands with Frederick, it was an alliance without pecuniary inducements. On his way back from Italy the King had been careful to renew the alliance with King Frederick August of Poland, the former Elector of Saxony. As the result of a three-kings meeting at Berlin that followed shortly afterwards, Prussia also joined the alliance despite the readiness of Sweden to make any reasonable concessions.

Denmark declared war against Sweden on the 28th October 1709. The real motives were the historic rivalry with her northern neighbour and the revived hope of regaining the lost provinces. A Danish army corps of 15,000 men landed on the Scanian coast near Helsingborg at the beginning of November. While this force was invading Scania, it was intended that a Norwegian army should attack Sweden from the north-west. The earliest phase of the campaign was marked by a lack of unity in the Danish command. The Danish Com-

BATTLE OF HELSINGBORG

mander, Count Christian Reventlow, who was in favour of capturing Malmö and Landskrona, was ordered by the King to rid the whole of Scania of the Swedes. As the commander of the Norwegian army had neither the energy nor the will to fight, Magnus Stenbock, the Swedish commander, was able to withdraw his troops from the north-west and unite with his main army. At this juncture Reventlow fell ill and was succeeded by Jørgen Rantzau, a brave cavalry leader, but one scarcely fitted for an independent command. So he proved to be in the Battle of Helsingborg (10th March 1710) when he ruined his position by imprudently leading his right forward in a cavalry attack. The day ended in the complete elimination of the Danes from Helsingborg.

While the Czar was winning one advantage after another in Northern Europe, the Danish army was being reorganised with the greatest energy. But the continuance of operations was interrupted by the outbreak of the plague in Elsinore and later in Copenhagen, where one-third of the population perished. It was during the visitation of the plague in 1712 that Frederick, who had long since tired of Anna Louise, eloped with Anna Sophie Reventlow, a daughter of a former High Chancellor, Konrad Reventlow of Klausholm, and committed his second act of bigamy in marrying hermorganatically. On the death of the Queen nine years later, he freed his conscience by marrying Anna a second time and making her his Queen.

When the plague had done its worst, the northern powers of Europe, who were beginning to tire of the extravagances of Charles XII, agreed to make a concerted attack on the Swedish possessions in North Germany. The Swedish commander-in-chief, Magnus Stenbock, was however equal to the occasion and, by a feat of remarkable skill, succeeded in cutting a wedge between the allied forces and the Danish army which was posted, 12,000 strong, near Gadebusch in Mecklenburg. The result was another Danish defeat, though a less dishonourable one than that of Helsingborg. Victory merely retarded the final downthrow of Stenbock. Danish threats of the conclusion of an immediate peace with Sweden rallied to her the Saxons and the Russians. For Stenbock there was no other

VICTORIES OF THE DANES

way of escape than to throw himself into the Jutish Peninsula and thus remove himself farther from his base. The Hamburgers watched gleefully Altona, a rival city, burning before their eyes at the instigation of Stenbock. Exposed to the danger of being surrounded on every side, he signed a secret agreement with Christian August of Gottorp, which opened to his army the fortress of Tönning, in case of necessity.

The Swedes were meanwhile encompassed by a vastly superior force of Danes, Saxons and Russians, and began to withdraw to Tönning. The King seized the occasion to take possession in 1713 of all ducal lands. Before very long the starvation of his troops induced Stenbock to surrender. He was led as a prisoner to the citadel of Copenhagen, where he died three years later. When the fortress of Tönning was finally surrendered by the Ducal commander, the Danes discovered the original of the secret agreement between Stenbock and Christian August. Frederick IV had no longer any compunction in occupying the ducal portions of South Jutland and Holstein "by the right of war."

Charles XII, on his return from his forlorn mission to Turkey to seek her assistance against Russia, found that the number of his enemies had increased and multiplied. The mere intimation of his return was enough to draw the allies nearer together. To this number was now added King George I of England, the former Elector of Hanover, who rewarded Denmark for the sale of Bremen and Verden¹ by guaranteeing her the possession of the Gottorpian part of Schleswig. Denmark and Prussia, who were both competitors for lands in Northern Europe, ended by agreeing to divide equally the Swedish possessions in Pomerania. Prussia was also ready to give Denmark a like guarantee as the King of England in respect of Gottorp. The war now centred round Rügen and Stralsund, where Charles XII himself conducted the defence. The great achievements of the Danish fleet, under Admiral Christen Thomesen Sehested, prevented the Swedes from obtaining reinforcements. His first victory enabled Denmark to land troops in Rügen and conquer the island, on which hung the fate of Stralsund. King Charles

¹ Treaty of Copenhagen, 1715.

BATTLE OF DYNEKILEN

miraculously escaped to Sweden leaving Rügen and Upper Pomerania in the hands of the Danes. Sweden lost her last foothold south of the Baltic when the Danes conquered Wismar.

Wherever he turned, Charles XII met with disappointment. Ill weather destroyed his plan of crossing the ice to Zealand. At the time that he was attempting to reduce the fortress of Frederiksten in Norway, the news came of the brilliant victory of the Danish Admiral Tordenskjold in Dynekilen on the 8th July 1716. The results of the victory were immediate. On the following day King Charles and his army left Norway.

The years 1716-18 were not entirely free from exciting events, though they never led to hostilities. They mainly revolved round the plans of Russia and Denmark to make a concerted attack on Sweden in order to make her humiliation complete. It has never been properly understood why an army of 30,000 Russians with the Czar at its head and of 23,000 Danes, which congregated at Copenhagen in July 1716 ready to cross the Sound, gave up the attempt. The most plausible explanation is that Peter the Great and Frederick IV viewed one another with equal suspicion, and that the latter had the greater reason for it. Apparently Frederick was warned by John George of Holstein that the Czar was more his enemy than the Swedes. The English Admiral Norris, who was in command of a visiting squadron, also advised him to beware of the Russian ships in the harbour. The Czar spoke with bitterness of the strength of the English fleet and of her long stay at Copenhagen.

While Charles XII was reorganising an army in a last attempt to conquer Norway, Tordenskjold was busy harassing the Swedish coasts and ships. In September 1718 Charles again moved his army into Norway; one division was sent to Trondhjem, and the main army turned on Frederiksten. It was here that Charles was shot dead when on the point of attack. Ten days later the Swedes were out of the country. The division that had been sent to besiege Trondhjem was no more fortunate, for during its retreat it was overcome by a violent snowstorm that cost it 3,500 men.

The war was now virtually at an end. The Russians continued to devastate the Swedish coasts while Denmark was

PEACE OF FREDERIKSBORG

at the same time trying to improve her position by allowing Tordenskjold to make an attack on Bohus. Here he was again to excel as one of the greatest of Danish Admirals. He was bent on capturing Marstrand which, since its conquest by Gyldenlöve in 1677, had been so strongly fortified that it was regarded as impregnable. The harbour had two small entrances guarded by a strong fort and a Swedish squadron. Within a few days the town and the ships were in his power.

The great fortress could only be taken by strategem. He made its commander, Colonel Dankwert, believe that a Danish army of 20,000 men was on its way and invited him to prove it with his own eyes. The Colonel took him at his word and sent one of his captains into the town. Tordenskjold entertained him so royally that his bedimmed eyes mistook the besieging army for the vanguard of the approaching 20,000. He returned to his commander with the news that Tordenskjold had several thousand men with him instead of a few hundred. Dankwert immediately signed his surrender. When he began to waver, Tordenskjold, accompanied by two officers, approached the fortress and shouted at him: "What in the devil are you driving at, don't you know that the time has expired?" The bewildered commander marched out with his garrison and in the coming year was sentenced to death by court martial. A few months later Tordenskjold burnt the Swedish ships lying in the harbour of Elfsborg. Immediately afterwards, at the behest of England and France, a six-months' armistice was declared. Under the Peace of Frederiksborg of the 3rd July 1720, Denmark gave up her conquered territory in return for an indemnity and the abolition of Sweden's immunity from the payment of the Sound dues. Denmark gained two substantial advantages: Sweden was compelled to desist in the future from lending support to the Holstein-Gottorp Duke, and France and England guaranteed Denmark's possession of the ducal part of Schleswig "in perpetuity."

The natural result of the peace of Frederiksborg was the drawing together of Sweden and Denmark. That eternal thorn in the flesh, the rivalry for the possession of the Scanian provinces, had been eliminated for ever. So long as Russia

ANNEXATION OF DUCAL PART OF SCHLESWIG

held to her pretension of being the supreme power in the Baltic, there was an additional reason for a common front between the Scandinavian countries. That peace was assured to Denmark during the remaining years of Frederick IV must be largely attributed to the European situation. Russia remained a constant threat to peace and her relations with Denmark were not improved by the refusal of Frederick to allow Russian ships a free entry through the Sound and to give his son Christian in marriage to Peter's daughter, Anna. When this rejected princess was betrothed instead to Charles Frederick of Gottorp, the latter naturally reckoned on the help of Russia to recover his lost land. But the general balance of power in Europe was not unfavourable to Denmark. Prussia could be counted on to preserve her neutrality, and the Emperor in Vienna was ill-disposed towards Gottorp. As a counter-check to the Austro-Russo-Spanish alliance, there existed the Hanoverian Alliance between France and England-Hanover, an alliance which offered a natural shelter for the Scandinavian countries. So long as the widow of Peter I, Catherine, was the ruling Empress of Russia, it behoved Denmark to keep a fleet in the Baltic; but on her death (1727) friendly relations between the two lands were restored and Charles Frederick was forced to retire to Kiel. A month before England and France had concluded friendly alliances with Frederick IV. In addition to renewing the guarantee for Schleswig, the French King agreed to pay Denmark a yearly subsidy of 350,000 rigsdaler. Sweden also joined the alliance.

A year after the signing of peace, Frederick IV proceeded to annex formally the ducal portion of Schleswig by releasing his new subjects from their loyalty to the Duke of Gottorp. It is significant that there was no actual incorporation of the new territory in Denmark, but a mere incorporation under the "Crown." The customs frontier remained as before, and the question of languages was completely ignored. Though the process of moulding together the discordant factors presented great difficulties because of the separate uniformity of Schleswig, it is at least surprising that Denmark did not seize this opportunity of absorbing culturally a population, the

great majority of which spoke Danish. It is undeniable that a national feeling flowed less freely in Frederick's blood than in his father's. This trait was exposed in the changes he made in the Government, as in the appointment as High Chancellor of Ulrich Adolf Holstein, a brother-in-law of the Queen. A foreign minister reported at the time: "The Queen's family is trying by every means to control the government, so that from now onwards no inborn Dane can be found in the Council or at Court, only Holsteiners or other foreigners who are related to the Reventlow family." It has also to be remembered that the King, through past experience, entertained the deepest distrust of all officials, particularly when they belonged to the old Danish nobility.

In his last years the chief pre-occupation of the King was public education. Added to this the death of his children by Anna Sophie was turning his thoughts more and more towards religion. Missionaries were sent out to convert the people of Lapland, Greenland and the East Indies. It was in these years that Hans Egede made his memorable visit to Greenland, where he spent fifteen years of fatigue and hardship, spreading religion and culture amongst the Esquimaux. Until the time of Frederick IV public education in Denmark was of a very inferior order. Itinerary school teachers had wandered from village to village giving elementary tuition, usually in primitive huts, and no classes could be held during winter. Denmark now saw for the first time the introduction of primary education: 240 schools were established on the Crown's estates and teachers were given fixed wages. The meagre education given to the King in his younger days was responsible for his lack of interest in the sciences, although he had a natural bent for sculpture, painting, music and horticulture. A redeeming feature of this somewhat weak intellectual background was his zealous care for the State's finances. Like Christian IV he scrutinised carefully all the official accounts and introduced economies where he could. But this craze for economy did not save the nation at his death from a debt of 3,000,000 rigsdaler, half of which had been left to him by Christian V.

A serious consequence of these efforts to reduce the National

THE GREAT FIRE OF COPENHAGEN

Debt was the impossibility of lightening the burden of taxation, which fell hardest on agriculture. When the country looked to a recovery after the war, the price of corn fell to a lower figure than in many years past and, to add to this misfortune, the export of cattle was suffering from the high import duties imposed by the Netherlands. Worst of all was the position of the peasant, because, the greater the plight of the landowner, the more he exacted forced labour. But the harshness of the Danish landowners could not be compared to the brutality of the landowners in parts of Holstein, although in certain parts of the Duchies, the peasants' rights as freemen were more secure than in Denmark. Frederick IV, in his sympathy for the Danish peasant, forbade the spoliation of their homes and the annexation of their lands to estates, but the generosity which inspired this measure was spoilt by an ordinance of 1724 which stipulated that all young men were to be enrolled in the reserve and were not to leave the estate in which they resided until they had completed six years of service or reached their thirty-fifth year.

Industry and commerce during this period could show little better results than agriculture. Both the Greenland Company and the East India Company ceased to exist. The Government bestowed most of their favours on the capital and granted it the monopoly for the import of salt, wine, brandy and tobacco. But such prosperity as could be said to exist was destroyed by the outbreak of fires in the leading cities of Denmark during these years. The most disastrous of all was the great fire of Copenhagen of 1728. Two of the principal churches were burnt to the ground and a similar fate befell the Town Hall and the University with its valuable library. In all two-fifths of the town were destroyed.

Frederick IV died on the 12th October 1730, after a reign of thirty-one years, which may be regarded as one of the most notable in Danish history. He was fortunate in not sharing the fate of past warrior kings who had turned victory into defeat. A long eventful war had completely altered his position in the North. In his foreign relations, he maintained a cautious reserve which saved the country from hazardous adventures, but the same prudence prevented him from

ANNA SOPHIE

making great decisions and bringing to fruition the noble aims of a generous-minded monarch. Though he entrusted the administration of the country to German nobles, he was at heart a Dane, simple in his habits, and felt himself at one with his people. His last moments must have been fraught with anxiety for the future of Anna Sophie, to whom he was deeply attached.

It was to be expected that the first act of Christian VI, after he had given his father an honourable funeral, would be to unloose his wrath on Anna Sophie, the widowed Queen, who had been responsible for the estrangement between father and son. Anna Sophie only saved herself from dire retribution by adopting a penitent attitude and placing herself completely at Christian's mercy. This so softened the heart of the pious King that she was able to live comfortably at Klaus-holm for the rest of her days. All else that had been left to her under her husband's will was taken from her. While Christian was settling her future, he was making a clean sweep of the personnel of the Government, particularly those who had been party to her marriage. The High Chancellor, Count Holstein Holsteinborg, was retired on a pension, but the others were less fortunate.

Of the members of his father's Privy Council, Christian only retained Christian Ludwig Plessen, whom he placed at the head of the finances. He and his brother, Charles Plessen, and Baron Ivar Rosenkrantz, who had suffered from the hostility of the late King towards the old Danish nobility, these made up the official bodyguard of the King. Inheriting the business-like qualities of his father in his diligent application to the affairs of State, Christian VI possessed a finer personality and a higher character. A deep concern for the welfare of his people was combined with an equally deep concern for the maintenance of royal power. But the hopes of a more peaceful time within the kingdom were disappointed.

The King's whole nature was governed by an extreme pietism which won him the description of a "gentle chamberman who trembles at everything that makes a noise." His Queen, Sophie Magdalene of Brandenburg-Cülm bach, was one of the

poorest and least significant of German princesses. It caused little surprise when the Danish Court was opened to her mother and her poor relations. A German-born princess, she was married to a Danish king who was no less German. A rigidity that was common to them both separated them from the hearts of the people. As the Lord's Anointed, the royal couple were inclined to regard all men as sinners. Of sinful acts an exception was made in the shooting of game, to which the Queen was particularly addicted. To them was born a son, the later Frederick V, who did not resemble his parents in one single particular and for that reason was a popular Prince. At the age of 20 he married Louise, a daughter of George II of England. She was as much beloved as her mother-in-law was detested.

It might be said to be an axiom of many generations of Danish Kings that one hand took away what the other hand gave. Christian VI had no sooner abolished the militia fourteen days after his accession and given a general pardon to all persons who had evaded conscription, than he promptly shifted his ground by introducing a measure which forbade the peasants to leave an estate, establish themselves in the towns, or even to leave the kingdom without royal permission. The cause of this was that forced labour on the nobles' estates was undefined and was therefore subject to the will of the landowner; the natural result was that many peasants, on regaining their freedom, had fled the country. To make the *volte-face* complete, the King reconstituted the militia in 1733 and restored to the landlords the right of choosing their own men for military service. A soldier who was willing to lease a farm had to be replaced by another recruit from the same estate. The treatment meted out to the peasants by the landlords during these years with the full approval of the King savoured of mediaeval brutality. Recalcitrants could be imprisoned or made to serve as soldiers in the East Indies. The caprice of the King in such matters went to further lengths at the end of his reign. The order was given that no one in the militia must establish himself as farmer elsewhere than in the domain where he had been enrolled. Thus in his dying days the King had the supreme satisfaction of

TRADE ENTERPRISE

bequeathing to his country a throng of persons who had been deprived of the liberty accorded to them in the first months of his reign.

Against the futile attempts of the Government to help agriculture must be placed to their credit a greater spirit of enterprise in the promotion of trade and industry which compared favourably with the preceding reign. The West Indian Company (set up in 1672) extended its trade to China and in 1733 bought the island of St. Croix, which marked the beginning of the sugar trade. In 1732 the Asiatic Company took the place of the East Indian Company, but ceased to exist in 1844. Copenhagen, from its position between the North Sea and the Baltic, became an important centre for re-export trade. It was able for the first time to pride itself on the possession of a private bank which was independent of the Government. Gradually the parts of Copenhagen which had fallen victim to the great fire rose from their ashes. The King himself was less fortunate in his plans of reconstruction. Christiansborg Castle, of which he laid the foundations in 1733, was burnt to the ground sixty years later.

Justice must also be done to the part Christian VI played in the improvement of all administrative departments. There was certainly no lagging behind in the advancement of education. With the assistance of Hans Gram, a brilliant scholar, he increased the efficiency of the old Latin schools, many of them superfluous, by reducing their numbers and giving them a more practical curriculum of learning. Although the teaching of Latin continued to occupy more time than the teaching of other subjects, education became more modernised and pupils were taught to write in their maternal language. Primary education and the general widening of educational facilities followed the religious instincts of the King. Schools for the middle classes were set up in the towns where the former Latin schools had been suppressed. The attempts, however, to confer the benefit of elementary education on the country, so that the humblest might "learn the Christian doctrine, and reading, writing and arithmetic," broke before the obstinacy of the nobility who complained of the expenditure.

Without one or more European guarantors for the sanctity

PRINCE FREDERICK NEARLY GAINS SWEDEN

of Danish rule in Schleswig, a reconciliation with the Duke Charles Frederick of Gottorp would have been difficult and unnatural. When France and England, the original guarantors, separated from one another, Schleswig, as luck would have it, obtained two new godfathers, the Emperors of Germany and Russia. In order to secure the accession of his daughter, Maria Theresa, to his various States, the Emperor Charles VI needed the support of as many European States as possible. Consequently the two Emperors concluded a defensive alliance with Christian VI, by which both gave a guarantee for Schleswig. Two years later (1734) a peaceful era was further assured by an alliance between Denmark and Sweden which was to last fifteen years. At the same time both England and France were scrambling for the possession of Denmark as an ally. Christian followed the advice of his intimate friend and counsellor, the Protestant Prince Stolberg, in concluding a three-years' alliance with England on the 30th September 1734.

But relations with Sweden, so recently fortified by a defensive alliance, were suddenly disturbed over the question of the succession to the Swedish throne that gained importance during the war between Sweden and Russia, for which the former was responsible. The Swedish peasants, who had been Denmark's bitterest enemies in the past, formed a large party which desired the election of the Crown Prince Frederick to the Swedish throne. The delighted King Christian hesitated not a moment to give the movement his support. Several thousands of Dalkarle moved into Stockholm in 1743 to elect the Danish prince. At this moment the Empress Elizabeth interposed with the offer of a cheap peace for Sweden if she would elect her relation, Adolph Frederick of Gottorp. The Swedish Riksdag had no alternative but to surrender to *force majeure*, and the peasants of Dalarne were roughly expelled from the city.

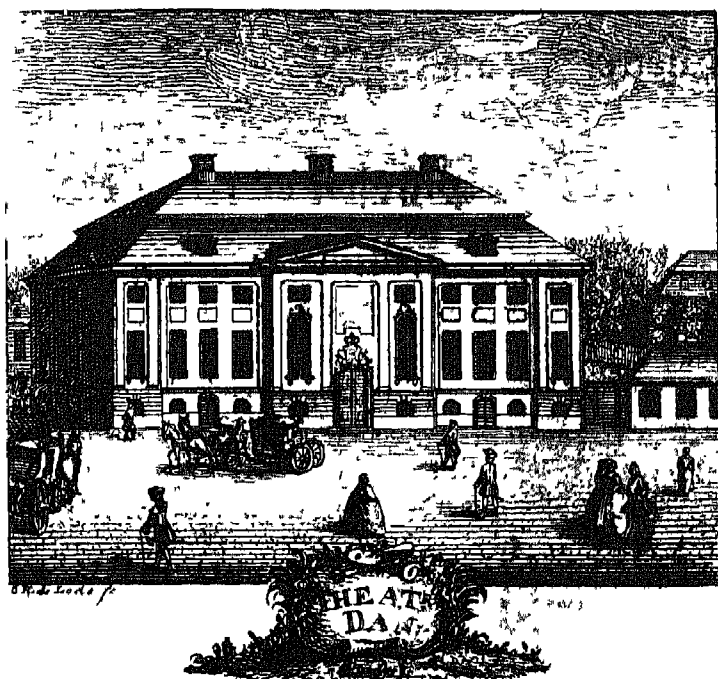
Christian VI, though a peacefully minded man, was so upset by the event that he began to arm to the teeth. It was not a happy outlook for Denmark that both the Swedish and Russian thrones might be occupied by the Princes of Gottorp. Fortunately wiser counsels took possession of the King at the

ALLIANCES WITH RUSSIA AND FRANCE

moment he was planning an attack on Scania. When Russia came to the assistance of Sweden, not an ally was left to Denmark. Although Sweden, in renewing the alliance of 1734, could be said to have recognised that she must no longer interfere in the affairs of Gottorp, there remained the ominous factor that the Swedish Crown Prince had not renounced his claim to the ducal part of Schleswig. It was due to the skill and ability of Charles Holstein, who was sent as Danish Ambassador to the Russian Court, that an alliance was signed with Russia in 1746 which was given a lease of fifteen years. It fell to another skilful diplomat, J. H. E. Bernstorff, to annex France as a second ally, so that, at the time of Christian VI's death, Denmark found herself strengthened by alliances with two important States.

Christian VI died on the 6th August 1746. An extreme piety, a natural timidity and a too easy subservience to his statesmen and courtiers, these were not qualities that could endear him to the nation. But no one could deny that, in the promotion of learning and science, commerce and navigation, he served his country well. Also he was deeply sensitive of the responsibilities of a Sovereign. He was the first Danish King whose reign was free from wars.

It was under absolute monarchy that Denmark first experienced the change from a theological outlook on the world, resting exclusively on the Bible, to a more worldly outlook which embraced State, morals, religion and science. In the reigns of Frederick IV and Christian VI, Ludwig Holberg, who was born in Bergen in 1684, had already opened the way with a wealth of philosophical literature which was tolerant in spite of the prevailing pietism. His earliest work, the *Introduction to European History*, was the result of his two years' study at Oxford University. A few years later appeared his *National and Popular Rights* which was founded on Grotius. He found in satire, no less than in history, a happy medium for opening the minds of his generation. When he had satisfied his "poetical rapture" for writing satires, he turned to comedy. Pietism and a prejudicial University killed all attempts to establish a Danish theatre until a Royal theatre was built and Holberg's thirty-four comedies found a theatrical



OLD ROYAL THEATRE (1748)

LUDWIG HOLBERG

home. They were either classical, Italian masque comedies, or were inspired by Molière. During his last twenty-five years, Holberg was again the historian, writing more for the general public than for the learned classes. Placing culture before all else, he idolised most Peter the Great, but he was also an admirer of that "great and lively King," Christian IV.

Pietism also played its part in developing a wider social and intellectual outlook. At religious meetings men of the highest aristocracy, Court pages and common labourers could be seen sitting side by side. The distribution of newspapers, a complete innovation, helped to broaden the intellectual horizon of the middle classes. Those whose interest in public life had been hitherto confined to town and village were suddenly brought in contact with the outer world. Far behind in culture was the peasant class and also the lower world of the towns. Neither state nor commune, up till the end of the century, did anything for their education. It was pietism alone that made it a duty to raise them from the depths of ignorance.

CHAPTER XVII

WHEN Frederick V ascended the throne in 1746, the common conception of absolute monarchy as established by the grace of God belonged to the past. There was no quarrel with the system in itself, but with its origin. Frederick believed with the French philosophers that it derived its power from the people and used the words of the great Frederick II of Prussia : " I am the first servant of the Nation." Frederick, unlike his father, had a free and easy manner ; he was " a fine gentleman of whom we have great expectations," wrote a Swedish diplomat. The removal of all restraints on public liberty was one of the first acts of his reign. From the moment of his accession, the nation breathed in a new atmosphere of unlicensed gaiety. Balls, concerts and theatricals became the order of the day. The weak and dissolute side of the King's character mixed easily in these new surroundings, nor did it undergo any change after his marriage to Louise, the daughter of King George II of England, a princess whose grace and gentleness won the immediate affections of her people. Great was their grief when death removed her after eight years of marriage. She was the mother of four children—a son who became Christian VII, and three daughters ; one married Gustav III of Sweden ; the other two were married to the Elector of Hesse-Kassel and his brother.

That Frederick made no radical changes in the administration of the country from his earliest moments as king was because he preferred to leave everything in the hands of his favourite, Adam Gottlob Moltke. In the first years not a single law was altered or introduced, though it appears that these years were the only period in his reign when he showed any interest in public affairs. The son of a poor nobleman belonging to a family which had wide family connections both in Germany and Denmark, A. G. Moltke exercised the greatest

influence on the King during this reign. Only a few months after his accession, Frederick made him Chief Marshal in the royal household. Though he declined a seat in the Privy Council, he was the intermediary between the King and his Ministers, who invariably took counsel of him. There are few sources from which we can gain an impression of the life and activities of this outstanding man. He held a position previously unknown in Danish history. Public opinion looked askance at a Chief Marshal who, as a mere court official, could have used the King's weaknesses to his own advantage. There was in reality no trace of the despot in Moltke; all evidence shows that he discharged his duties with loyalty and moderation. The death of Schulin, who had been Minister for Foreign Affairs both under Christian VI and in the first years of Frederick V, brought to the front another statesman of high personal qualities, John Hartvig Ernst Bernstorff, a Hanoverian subject, who had been Danish Minister in Paris.

The position of Schleswig-Holstein in relation to Denmark was now, as always, of sufficient importance to be the deciding factor in Denmark's relations with European Powers. Under Christian VI controversy had ranged round the question of the succession to the Swedish throne. It remained for Frederick V and his advisers to turn to the best account the recent alliance with Russia and France. Obsessed by hatred of the Gottorpian family and by the fear that the known attributes of the Crown Prince of Sweden, Adolph Frederick, might make him a dangerous imitator of Charles XII, Alexis Bestuchief, the Russian High Chancéllor, was determined to remove the danger by making capital out of Sweden's internal troubles. Much as Denmark and Russia had in common in their relations to Sweden, there was no inclination in Copenhagen to let itself be the tool in a Russian policy of expansion which aimed at driving Adolph Frederick out of Sweden or in a policy which aggravated relations with Prussia. Denmark, on the contrary, set particular price on preserving good relations with France, Prussia, Poland and Western Europe, as the best means of being reconciled to the Swedish Crown Prince. Sweden, foreseeing that she had most to gain by joining Denmark against the Russian menace, signed a preliminary agree-

ment with Denmark on the Gottorpien question on the 7th August 1749. A week later the alliance between Denmark and France was renewed.

The final settlement of Denmark's relations with Sweden and France took place on the 25th April 1750. On this occasion Adolph Frederick renounced in his own name and in the name of his successors all claims to the former ducal portion of Schleswig and to the island of Femern. If the princely part of Holstein at any time fell to him or his descendants, it would be handed over to the King of Denmark in return for the surrender of Oldenburg and Delmenhorst, and the payment of an indemnity of 200,000 rigsdaler. In practice it meant that in the event of the actual Duke of Holstein-Gottorp, the Grand Duke Charles Peter Ulrik of Russia, dying without issue, as seemed probable at the time, and his rights were transferred to the Swedish Gottorpians, these would be unable to dispute the rights of Denmark to the former ducal portion of Schleswig. Frederick V had achieved what his father had vainly worked for in the years 1743-4.

Bernstorff was eminently suited to take over the position of Foreign Minister vacated by Schulin. He was not only an experienced diplomat, with a wide knowledge of the conflicting interests of European states, but a man with a fixed goal—the preservation of Denmark's neutrality in all circumstances. A singularly fine character, he united in his person a keen intelligence, a high refinement and a peculiar gift for touching at the fundamental roots of political questions. There were both the negative and positive side to his political aims; on one side neutrality at all costs, on the other side a determination to heighten the "reputation" of the State which could be won by a clever and active diplomacy. His main purpose was to unite the lands north of the Elbe under the authority of the King and to remove all traces of the ruinous divisions to which earlier kings had subjected the Duchies.

There were not lacking the opportunities for Bernstorff to present Denmark as a neutral power. Immediately after the outbreak of the Seven Years' War, the Scandinavian lands concluded a neutrality alliance for the protection of their trade and the establishment of peace in the Baltic. But the alliance

TREATY OF KLOSTERZEVEN

brought little results, for England placed the greatest hindrances in the way of neutral trade. Denmark's neutral position also gave Bernstorff the opportunity to intervene in a contest between a French army under Marshal d'Estrées and a Hanoverian "army of observation" under the leadership of the Duke of Cumberland. After the victory of the French at Hastenbech, the Duke appealed to the Danish Government to intervene and arrange an armistice. Bernstorff would have probably refused if a similar approach had not been made to him by the Duke of Richelieu, the Marshal's successor. The Treaty of Klosterzeven was signed on the 10th September 1757 and was intended to give satisfaction to both parties; England and Hanover because they had slipped from the clutches of France, and France because she wished to employ all her forces against Prussia. But the Government in Versailles showed a disinclination to ratify the treaty and the English Government and public opinion were averse to these dynastic calls upon the public purse. Bernstorff, as a good Hanoverian, declared that never during his years in the King's service had he met with a greater disappointment than when the Treaty of Klosterzeven came to nothing.

It looked suddenly as if the whole framework of Bernstorff's policy of preserving neutrality and of employing it skilfully in the development of Danish trade with the Mediterranean countries would be shattered to pieces when the Empress Elizabeth died in 1762 and Denmark's worst enemy, the Gottorpian Charles Peter Ulrik, mounted the Russian throne as Peter III. Denmark had reason to be terror-stricken as she hastened to assemble an army to guard her southern frontier. Now that her past allies had forsaken her, she stood completely alone; any hope that Prussia might act as a bulwark against Russian ambitions was dissipated when the two countries not only signed peace but an alliance. To prepare herself for all emergencies, Denmark had year after year maintained a defensive force of 24,000 men in Holstein and some good-sized squadrons at sea.

By a happy inspiration Denmark called to her service a distinguished French general, St. Germain, one year before the death of the Empress Elizabeth. Within a short time he

RECONCILIATION BETWEEN DENMARK AND RUSSIA

brought the Danish army up to a warlike footing, so that 30,000 men were ready to withstand a Russian advance on Mecklenburg. At the same time the Danish fleet, which was superior to the Russian, moved into the Baltic. This time fortune was to favour Denmark. Before even the Danish army could march into Mecklenburg, Peter III was removed from the throne by his wife, who henceforth ruled Russia as the Empress Catherine II. She immediately made it known to the Danish Government that she desired to restore and to strengthen the old friendship between Denmark and Russia. Although the ties of the past bound Bernstorff closer to France than to any other power and he utterly distrusted Catherine, he saw the wisdom of an understanding with Russia. On the 11th March 1765 an alliance was concluded between Denmark and Russia in which both sides declared it of the greatest importance that Sweden's freedom and Constitution should be upheld; but in addition to this the Empress promised that even before her son Paul, who on his father's death became Duke of Gottorp, had reached majority, she would be agreeable to a provisional agreement with Denmark for the settlement of the dispute with Gottorp. The exchange of the ducal portion of Holstein for Oldenburg and Delmenhorst was suggested as the solution.

The escape from military complications during this reign facilitated greatly the development of commerce and navigation in which Frederick built on the foundations laid by his father. No flag was more respected than the Danish in the days when commercial competition in the Mediterranean was great. The new King, under Bernstorff's guidance, concluded one treaty after another with the important centres of Mediterranean trade, Genoa, Naples, Tunis, Tripoli and Turkey. This entry into the Mediterranean market brought Denmark into difficulties with Spain and Portugal. Whilst Danish merchant vessels were exploring seas and markets, home industries were assiduously cultivated under foreign control but without any regard to the fundamental principles of trade; Denmark resorted to prohibitive tariffs for the protection of home manufactures, which also received subsidies. As there was insufficient capital to support these new undertakings, all the attempts of the Government to protect their

COMMERCIAL PROGRESS

interests proved inadequate. Now as before foreign goods were smuggled into the country, nor could all the King's ordinances penalising this practice "prevent his subjects from indulging in reprehensible luxury." Of the shipping companies, only the Asiatic Company, which had supplanted the East India Company in the 'thirties, fulfilled its purpose. Private enterprise in commerce and navigation covered a far larger field. It included not only trading in European waters, but extended also to the colonies beyond the Atlantic. Taken all in all, the commerce of Denmark and Norway made no little strides in the reign of Frederick V.

But the foreign element that dominated Danish life during these years was not confined to the class of industrialists. Bernstorff thought it of the highest importance to the nation that it should open its doors to foreign talent, literary, artistic and scientific. The famous writer Klopstock was given a home in Denmark and a yearly pension. The German botanist Öder laid out the botanical gardens at Copenhagen. It was due to Bernstorff that Denmark gave a welcome to the French artists Saly and Jardin and to the French-Swiss, Mallet and Reverdil, the last of whom was tutor to the Crown Prince. The German scientist Niebuhr was sent to Arabia and Egypt in 1761 on an archæological expedition, but all his companions fell victim to the insalubrity of the climate.

Critics of this humanitarian period cannot help being astounded that no thought was given to the welfare of the peasant, whose unhappy plight remained unchanged under Frederick V. From the mistaken idea that only his enforced confinement to the place of his birth would keep the land under cultivation, the Government refused to redress this grievance. Little by little the lands became depopulated by emigrations and desertions which the severest measures could not prevent. Notwithstanding, it was the liberal spirit of this reign that led to the final enfranchisement of the peasant. It was perhaps retarded by the decision of the Government, excusable in itself, to sell the Crown Lands. Only in small localities in Fünen and Jutland could the peasants afford to purchase their tenant lands: the greater part of the royal domains were bought by speculators, with the result that new

CHRISTIAN VII

landed estates were created and, for the purpose of their aggrandisement, numerous farms and villages were extinguished. The comparative freedom of the Press, both at home and abroad, opened the eyes of the public to the sufferings of the peasant class. High-born citizens placed themselves at the head of a movement for the defence of the rural community. It speaks much for the seriousness of their efforts that the goal was reached only eighteen years after the death of Frederick V.

How different is the real living picture of Frederick V from the portraiture made of him by eminent authors of the time who bestowed on him praises far beyond his deserts. The briefest review of his government is sufficient to prove that all the honours belonged to his ministers, first and foremost, Bernstorff and Moltke. Not even the influence of his first wife Louise could cure him of his debauched habits. Yet he genuinely mourned her loss when she died in 1751, and her name was frequently on his lips as he lay dying in the presence of his second wife, Juliane Marie. A disorderly life ended his days prematurely at the age of 46. Moltke had fought a loyal but fruitless fight to keep him in hand. For all his shortcomings, Frederick V was loved by his people.

Christian VII was scarcely 17 years old when he ascended the throne, the 14th January 1766. Undoubtedly a highly gifted man, his early upbringing had been entrusted to the brutal and pedantic Ditlev Reventlow. Of Christian's various tutors, E. S. Reverdil was the only one to arouse in him a proper conception of his royal duties. From his youth upwards Christian betrayed many of the traits of his ancestors ; he was lively and intelligent but derisive of others, shyly suspicious and erotic. This composite character excited both admiration and anxiety amongst the rulers of the land. In 1766 he married Caroline Matilda, the sister of George III. Marriage did not alter the ways of the new King. Leaving his Queen at home he would give himself up to every form of gaiety and dissipation. He even played the leading rôles in the productions of the Court Theatre. The Ministers were prepared for all sorts of scandals when he set out on his journey to Hanover, England and France in 1768. Contrary to

expectation, he surprised foreign Courts by his modest behaviour and impressed princes and statesmen with his high intelligence.

But Christian was already a sick man. His illness was a typical case of *dementia praecox*. No one could see it at first. Quite unversed in the affairs of government, this hapless youth was called upon to preside over the meetings of the Privy Council in the company of Bernstorff, Moltke and his former tutor, D. Reventlow. But only in his first years of government did he attend to public business. Before one year of his reign was over, both the Court and the Cabinet became the playground for violent disputes and intrigues. Both A. G. Moltke and Reventlow were dismissed, only to be reinstated within a short time. When Reverdil lost his position as Secretary to the Cabinet, the confusion increased. Bernstorff was at his best in thwarting the intrigues of his many enemies to depose him. His opponents desired to strengthen the powers of the King; he himself recommended the centralisation of public control in the Privy Council. At a time when the highest circles of government were planning far-reaching reforms, any advance in this direction was checked by the lawlessness in the Court and in the administration. Still, it must be said of Christian VII that, in his more lucid moments, he showed himself to be the sincere friend of the peasant class.

Christian's journey to foreign countries in 1768 opened the most eventful chapter in the history of this reign. Before his departure he had been recommended to appoint as his physician-in-ordinary Johann Friedrich Struensee, a doctor and head physician in Altona. He was a free thinker, a social self-seeker and a winning personality, especially in relation to the opposite sex. It was not long before he established himself so firmly in the favours of the King that he was able to play a decisive part in public life. Although at first he was treated with distrust by the Queen, she changed her mood when he achieved the notable triumph of reconciling the royal couple. In recompense for this service, Struensee obtained a free admittance to the Court. To serve his ends, he selected as an intermediary one Enevold Brandt, a worthless character but popular with the King. Meanwhile the relations between

A NEW POLITICAL SYSTEM

Struensee and the Queen were growing more and more intimate and in 1770 he became to all appearances her lover, while the King looked on with indifference. It was now a matter of life and death to him to rise to the top of power. In the twinkling of an eye the great Bernstorff received his dismissal at the end of twenty years' loyal service. He took his dismissal with dignity and withdrew to Hamburg, where he died two years later.

Struensee had complete faith in his mission to lead Denmark in the path of reform. That he eventually failed was because his schemes outran the needs and desires of the Danish people. Though he never gave expression to any personal ill-will towards the nobility, he cared nothing for their privileges. He was certainly playing with fire when he made it his principle to oust them from the highest offices of state. In all things great and small he behaved like the born bureaucrat. It did not improve matters that, with the King's approval, the Privy Council was abolished and was replaced by a Royal Cabinet at the end of 1770. As Master of Requests and Minister of the Cabinet he possessed unfettered powers. The orders to which he appended his name had the same validity as if signed with the King's own hand.

From the Royal Cabinet Struensee wove and directed a new political system. All the existing branches of the administration were moulded into distinct departments, each with its fixed routine, and each under the control of one of his nominees. The central point of the administration was the College of Finances. Meritorious service and ability were the requisites for elevation to the higher offices and to the ranks of the nobility. In reforming the State, he stopped at nothing, and in one year he passed more legislative measures than would be normally enacted in a lifetime. It is significant that many of the men he specially favoured were closely connected with the dismissed régime. The abrupt dismissal of the municipal authorities of Copenhagen was perhaps the most striking exhibit of Struensee's ruthless methods, though the municipal administration had fallen into disrepute and its finances were in complete disorder. In the future only Government officials were to take charge of municipal affairs.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

The Court itself did not escape the economies effected by Struensee on public expenditure. The proceeds of the Sound dues, hitherto a Royal prerogative, were transferred to the Treasury. One of the few reforms to survive after Struensee's fall was the reorganisation of the Courts of Justice. The greater number of the existing Tribunals in Copenhagen were abolished and their place taken by a Court and Town Tribunal (*Hof-og-Stadsret*). Of the same order and no less meritorious was the measure which made the Supreme Court of Justice independent of the Executive.

One of the most liberal measures of Struensee, and one which elicited the applause of his most bitter assailants, was the establishment of the freedom of the Press. Some days before the dismissal of Bernstorff, the University, the Bishops and the head of the Academy of Sorö, who were in charge of the censorship, received this Royal Proclamation :

As it is as harmful to the impartial search for truth as it is for the examination of the errors and prejudices of ancient times that honest and zealous patriots should, in consequence of personal considerations, orders or ruling opinions, be prevented from writing freely according to their lights, conscience and conviction, the unlimited freedom of the Press is authorised in all the states and countries of the King, so that in the future no one shall be compelled to submit his books and his writings to the censorship hitherto in force.

Not only in Denmark, but in all the enlightened parts of Europe, this emancipation of the Press came as a pleasant surprise. The aged Voltaire addressed to the young King a poem congratulating him for having shown to the world that the liberty of the Press was not irreconcilable with an absolute monarchy. In order to put a check on the excesses of criticism and abuse which followed immediately the publication of the new order, another decree was promulgated in October 1771, declaring that the liberty of the pen must not in any way infringe other civil laws and that everyone would be responsible before the Tribunals for what he published.

It might have been thought that Struensee's material regard for the liberty of the people and the popularity it earned would have given him an unassailable position in Denmark. They

DISCONTENT WITH STRUENSEE

enjoyed an even greater freedom than at the beginning of the reign. The gates of Copenhagen were no longer closed to them at night-time ; the gardens of Rosenborg were converted into a recreation ground where concerts were given on Sunday afternoons, and the police were prohibited to enter any home of vice. It was difficult to provide the people with bread as well as amusement when the prices of corn and barley were at their highest. Both the Government and the magistrates fought this evil with the greatest energy ; masses of corn were distributed from the Royal stores at reduced prices and many imported foodstuffs were given free. Yet there were opposite feelings at play which got the upper hand and helped to foment the growing mistrust of Struensee. The discontent amongst the former ruling classes and influential circles in Copenhagen spread to the industries, who complained that their interests had been arrogantly neglected by the " almighty Minister." No less disgruntled were the factory employees and handworkers who, as the result of Struensee's economies, were either working at reduced wages or thrown out of work. The populace were particularly sensitive when a ruthless hand touched the heart of the Church. Had Struensee kept his reforming zeal within traditional limits, they would have remained silent, but many of his measures provoked feelings of revulsion in the least sensitive of minds. No difference was drawn between legitimate and illegitimate children, and, to prevent ostentatious expenditure, it was ordered that funerals should take place at night-time. Theatres were opened on the Sabbath, which had never been done before.

One incident, trivial in itself, helped to expose the shallow foundations of Struensee's rule. In their displeasure at the non-payment of their wages, a number of Norwegian sailors of the Royal Fleet went to Hirschholm Castle to present their complaint, though they had no evil intentions. The Royal Family took fright and prepared to leave for Kronborg. They were equally perturbed when the Guards' regiment mutinied because it refused to be incorporated in other regiments. These two events, taken together, were a sure indication that the executive power was weakening. It was all the more ominous for Struensee that his own friends were drawing

ARREST OF STRUENSEE

away from him, partly from jealousy and partly from fear of the future. It was his earlier friend and later enemy, Count Rantzau-Ascheberg, who engineered the Court Revolution that brought about Struensee's fall. As both Bernstorff and Moltke refused to be party to it, it developed into a military coup which had the active support of the Queen Dowager Juliane Marie and her young son Frederick.

In a ball at the Royal Theatre on the evening of the 16th January 1772, the enemies and friends of Struensee met for the last time in festive company. In the early hours of the following morning the King was aroused from his sleep to sign the necessary orders for the arrest of the Queen, Struensee and Brandt. Both Struensee and Brandt were surprised in their beds and made no attempt to resist. Only Caroline Matilda tried to stay the hands of the conspirators and to reach Struensee's rooms, which were guarded by officers and soldiers. Protesting violently, she was taken under escort to Kronborg Castle with her small daughter Louise Augusta.

Having placed Struensee safely under lock and key, his overthrowers were in considerable doubt on the next step to be taken. There existed the real danger that, unless the Royal marriage was dissolved, Caroline Matilda might regain the power she had recently acquired over Christian and use it to avenge the wrongs she had suffered. The general indignation at her suspected liaison seems to have overridden all other considerations in the proceedings that followed. The mixed committee which was appointed to try Struensee and Brandt soon found it impossible to substantiate the charge that the former had conspired to remove the King. They had therefore to fall back on the charges of immoral relationship with the Queen and of the act of *lese majesté* in procuring his appointment as Chief Minister of the Cabinet in violation of the King's Law. But to accuse openly the Queen and Struensee of an adulterous act would have been to throw to the winds all sense of public decency, and the second charge could only carry weight if the King was adjudged insane. As the King was officially still the acting ruler of the country, the charge against Struensee of having violated the King's Law automatically fell to the ground. At the time the King appointed Struensee

FLIMSINESS OF TRIAL

Chief Minister of the Cabinet, he was doubtless of uncertain mind, but it could not be the policy of any government in power to avow it.

Whatever the merits of the case, Struensee signed his own death-warrant when, on being told of the Queen's confinement in Kronborg, he lost self-control and spoilt a sound defence by confessing his guilt. This confession was a further demonstration of the weak and unchivalrous side to his character. On hearing of Struensee's betrayal, the luckless Queen had no other course but to acknowledge the liaison with the man to whom she was, without a doubt, passionately devoted. It would be difficult to withhold sympathy for a woman who was linked by marriage to such a wretched personality as Christian VII, or to shudder at the thought that she lost her young heart to a highly gifted man and considered that the misery of her married life justified her in having a lover.

On the 25th April 1772 Struensee was condemned to death ; first the right hand was to be cut off, then the head, and finally the body was to be broken to pieces on a wheel. The same fate befell Brandt, who, however disreputable, could only be accused of biting the King's finger. The sentences passed on these two men were nothing else than acts of political revenge. No one who followed the proceedings could have failed to be struck by the flabbiness and spitefulness of the charges against the accused. Political considerations were interwoven with unproved affirmations, and moral considerations overshadowed the juridical background. Struensee was accused of having failed to learn the Danish language and Constitution and of having advised the King to dismiss the Privy Council. Nor was there the slightest evidence that Struensee had conspired against the King's life or that he had acted wrongfully in accepting gifts from the King. No evidence was produced to substantiate the charge that Struensee was liable under the clause of the King's Law which imposed a death-sentence for anyone who " causes offence to the King or Queen," or attacks absolute monarchy or transacts business without the King's signature. Though Struensee may have been guilty on some counts, there was nothing said in the law about seducing a king's wife.



JOH. FR. STRUENSEE

CAROLINE MATILDA RETIRES TO CELLE

Caroline Matilda was saved from the ignominy of a close confinement in Aalborg through the intervention of her brother King George III of England. Public opinion in England believed in her innocence. She was taken on board an English warship at Elsinore and conducted to Celle in Hanover; her dowry, which she had brought with her from England, was restored to her. The thought of being separated for ever from her little daughter and her grief over Struensee's fate must have weighed most on her mind as she was leaving Kronborg. In the farewell parting with her little girl, "it was necessary to use force to wrench the little Princess from the arms of the Queen." It soon became the common belief that she had been the victim of intrigues and crimes, and that she had been shamefully forced to sign the declaration of her guilt. Words uttered on her death-bed, proclaiming her innocence, were brought to light; and when years later a very moving letter, couched in the same language, was published as having been written in her last days "with her own hand and feeling the approach of death," there were few that did not believe that she had been condemned an innocent person.¹

In the eyes of the populace, who had been kept ignorant of the King's state of health, he was now regarded as a free man who could once again exercise his royal powers. The new government resembled in outward form the one that had held office before Struensee had usurped power, but the new Council which was set up in great haste and bore the name of a "Council of State" differed essentially from its predecessor. It was composed of men who had taken the lead in overthrowing Struensee and of statesmen who belonged to the old school. As the King was incompetent to govern and the Crown Prince was a minor, it followed that the heir-presumptive, Prince Frederick, should present himself as the King's representative and preside over the Council. To it were admitted none of the heads of Ministries with the excep-

¹ My authority for this version of the romantic ending to Caroline Matilda's life is "Christian VII og Caroline Mathilde" by C. Blangstrup, who refers in turn to her history in the "Historiske Tidsskrift."

AN ABSOLUTE GOVERNMENT

tion of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. This novel procedure was intended to give it a freer hand in imposing its authority. All recommendations made by the various Colleges had to pass through the Council before being submitted to the King. In actual fact the King's hands were as tightly bound as in Struensee's time. The new Government was thus closely following his example in using the forms of absolute power, but it was obviously impossible to govern otherwise.

CHAPTER XVIII

IN the years 1772-84 Denmark was ruled by three persons : the Queen-Dowager Juliane Marie, her son Frederick and Ove Høegh-Guldberg. Of these two royal personages Juliane Marie was the more commanding personality. Though she aspired to take the lead, it was not long before she and her son fell under the influence of Høegh-Guldberg. Son of a small merchant in Horsens, Guldberg rose at the age of 24 to a professorship at the Sorø Academy. Three years later he became teacher to Prince Frederick and later secretary to his Cabinet. He was no statesman, had no knowledge of foreign affairs, and was blind to the necessity of reforms. Of all the statesmen that governed in the second half of the eighteenth century, he was the least effective, for he belonged to a past generation. Neither Guldberg nor his collaborators were progressists : on the contrary, all their acts savoured of extreme conservatism. The characteristics of the Guldberg period were to a great degree lack of leadership, sluggishness and stagnation. Although he had created a strong Council of State, he did not want it to be out of his control and therefore resorted to Cabinet orders which he had condemned so strongly in Struensee's time. The political atmosphere was speedily cleansed of Struensee's supporters, including Rantzau-Ascheberg, who retired to Avignon to live as a *grand seigneur*, and Osten, the Foreign Minister. Of the old brigade it was found a necessity to restore to office H. C. Schimmelmann, an experienced financier, and A. P. Bernstorff, the nephew of the great statesman, who was appointed in 1773 Foreign Minister and director of the revived German Chancery. A. P. Bernstorff acquired a greater name as statesman than any other living man in Denmark. He brought to the Council a power which it greatly needed. But the man who exercised the greatest influence at the time and proved to be a valuable

INCORPORATION OF HOLSTEIN

link between the Court and the Council was Schack Rathlou. Bernstorff himself said that he was the only man in the Council who could be called a statesman.

Bernstorff's first act as Foreign Minister was to ratify the treaty which his uncle had signed with Russia in 1767 regarding the exchange of the royal portion of Holstein for Oldenburg and Delmenhorst. Thus Denmark was finally confirmed in her possession of the whole of Holstein. All the branches of the Holstein-Kiel House also renounced their pretensions to the ex-Gottorp part of Schleswig. When the last Duke of Glücksburg died six years later, his possessions also reverted to Denmark, with the result that in 1779 all the separated parts of the kingdom were reunited with the exception of the territories pertaining to the Augustenborg line. The greatest danger—the Government overlooked it—was that the incorporation of the whole of Holstein under Danish rule was a direct challenge to Schleswig-Holsteinism. As previously, Denmark failed to profit by the occasion to support Danish nationalism in South Jutland.

A political system that rested on the dual control of the Court and Council could not long survive while all the leading men in the Government were struggling for power and differed in their allegiance to the Council and Court. A. P. Bernstorff was the principal opponent both of the Court and of Guldberg's policy and desired, as his uncle, to see unity in the administration and one central authority. But Bernstorff was not the strong figure he proved to be in his last period of office. In his fight for the independence of the Council and the Colleges, he raised a storm of opposition.

In the last years of the American War of Independence when the world's seas were the playground for warships and privateers, French, American and Spanish, Denmark, only with reluctance, became a party with Russia and other northern States to the League for the protection of neutral trade and shipping. Having little faith in the effectiveness of this alliance, and with his sympathies on the side of England, Bernstorff continued with her the negotiations for a separate contraband agreement, nor did he believe that, in doing so, he would bring on him the wrath of Russian statesmen. Five

DISMISSAL OF A. P. BERNSTORFF

days before the final signature of the Neutrality Convention, an agreement was signed with England under which living necessities, such as meat and fish, were not treated as contraband. Although the Danish Court approved Bernstorff's policy on many points, it apparently used Russia's displeasure at the signing of this agreement as an excuse for his dismissal in 1780. The exact reasons for this dismissal are hard to discover. Juliane Marie and her circle hated England, and it was therefore probably less the fear of Russia than intrigues within the Cabinet and Bernstorff's strained relations with the Court that brought about his dismissal.

It would be unfair to Guldberg's administration to pass over in silence one radical change which does him all honour. Nothing could deserve, in this otherwise insignificant government, greater appreciation than his active concern for the Danish language and culture. Danish was made the compulsory language in the learned schools and was used both on the stage and in army orders. Hired troops were no longer in use and the land militia was increased in numbers. No measure earned greater popularity than the Ordinance on the rights of nationality which was promulgated in 1776. Only Danes, Norwegians and Holsteiners were allowed admittance to State employment.

Because [said the law] fairness demands that the country's children need the country's bread. The experience of all times has taught us that in a land which cares for the upbringing of youth, there never lack able people when the ruler needs them. Also we can recall with joy our Fatherland's history because all classes can point to men who have served, honoured and saved the country and by noble decision have sacrificed themselves for the King.

It naturally caused consternation to the German officials that Denmark at one blow should cut herself off from European countries. In the first line of critics was A. P. Bernstorff. "There is no Dane," he declared, "that is more enthusiastic for his Fatherland than I am for Denmark."

In 1784 the Crown Prince Frederick came of age and, with this event, the Queen-Dowager and her son were forced to release their hold on passing events. Thanks to Struensee, the young weakling had by vigorous bodily training developed

REMOVAL OF GULDBERG

into a sturdy youth who enjoyed excellent health through a long life. His critics were inclined to exaggerate his shortcomings. It is certain that he showed little intelligence and self-control. But these early prognostications were unfulfilled in later years when he developed a strength of will and a warmness of heart which contrasted sharply with the hardness of his youth. He remained, however, always suspicious of attempts to undermine his power as a Regent.

There were many in high places who were only awaiting the confirmation of the Crown Prince in 1784 to overthrow the existing Government and to place him at the head of a Council of State, the members of which should be of his own choice. The plan was kept secret, and Guldberg prided himself that, with his majority in the Council, he could continue in power with the Crown Prince under his thumb. On the 14th April 1784 the Crown Prince attended for the first time a meeting of the Council. The day had been specially chosen for throwing a bomb at the Queen-Dowager and Guldberg. The new Ministers were on the point of giving their oaths of loyalty to the King, when the Crown Prince submitted a document that was to be signed by his father and contained the royal decision to dissolve the Cabinet and to appoint four new Ministers—namely, A. P. Bernstorff, Stampe, General Huth and F. C. Rosenkrantz. Although the heir-presumptive attempted to intervene, the Crown Prince was able to obtain the royal signature to the decision. It is easy to believe the discomfiture of the Queen-Dowager on seeing power suddenly wrenched from her hands. There was, however, no truth in the rumour that the Crown Prince was actuated by the wish to take vengeance on his mother. Juliane Marie retired to Fredensborg Castle and Guldberg became civil governor of the Diocese of Aarhus. Bernstorff returned from Germany to occupy his place in the Council.

No one could tell that the Government which came into power in April 1784 was destined to transform within a few years the whole social structure of the nation. It was fortunate that the circle of political leaders who were with few exceptions recruited from the ranks of the landed aristocracy had scarcely an equal in Danish modern history. At the head of it was

A STRONG COMBINATION

the sixteen-year-old Crown Prince who was not yet sufficiently mellowed to master the difficult problems that crossed his path. The highest official positions were still closed to the bourgeois class. Those who took the lead in the new Government were also culturally superior to all others of their generation. It is true that racial differences amongst them—Bernstorff and Schimmelmann were German-born—might present serious obstacles to an unity of national outlook. But opposition between the various sections of the community was only in its earliest stages and none were yet prepared for the responsibilities that would ere long be thrust upon them.

Although no visible portents pointed to the coming changes, humanitarian aims were not confined to members of the Council, of whom the leading spirits were Christian Reventlow of Lolland and Schimmelmann the younger. Looking beyond it were men of the highest official class whose minds were moving with the times. In the course of his foreign travels, learning economic conditions in various lands, Reventlow made a particular study of English agriculture and her free rural class. These men both hoped that, in calling back Bernstorff to Denmark, they would find in him an active ally in their plans for reform. They were not disappointed. During the years between 1784 and 1797 A. P. Bernstorff exercised the greatest influence on all the affairs of government, a position to which he was richly entitled by his unchallengeable gifts as a statesman. His personality grew richer with the years and his grasp of realities more comprehensive.

Already in the year 1780 it was rumoured that the Crown Prince's sister, the beautiful Louise Augusta, would marry Prince Frederick Christian of Augustenborg. It was a political marriage prompted by the fears of the Government that the main line of the royal dynasty might become extinct. Louise Augusta would in this case be heiress to Denmark and Norway as well as to Schleswig. As the Augustenborgs considered that they had the nearest rights to the royal part of Holstein, the marriage would result in uniting all parts of the State. It was consummated in 1786. Frederick Christian demanded and received a seat in the Council of State for which his natural gifts fitted him. He was both a progressist and a

FREEDOM OF THE PEASANT

conservative. Unfortunately he and the Crown Prince were so much the opposite in character and tastes that they were never able to make friends. The Council was delighted to discover in the Crown Prince a strong sense of duty and a taste for frugality and hard work.

In and outside of the Government, there was scarcely anyone of influence who was not convinced that the time had come for securing the freedom of the peasant class. The protagonists of the movement were assured of success when the Crown Prince and Bernstorff threw in their lot. At the end of 1784 a commission was appointed to introduce reforms amongst the peasants of North Zealand by way of an experiment. The result was that 1,300 families of farmers and 2,500 families of small tenants were given their freedom. Compulsory labour was abolished and the tithe was exchanged for a monetary payment, and hereditary farming was authorised. Stirred by this example, a fully representative agricultural committee was set up in 1786 which made recommendations, subsequently approved, for the abolition of all forms of compulsion and for the protection of the peasants against expulsion from their homes. Two further measures that favoured the peasant were the rights to trade in corn and to stall-feed oxen, which had hitherto been the exclusive privileges of the landowner. But the most important of all was the right accorded to the peasant to leave his home; with this measure the peasant first came into possession of his full personal freedom. Such was the indignation of the Conservatives in the Council that two of them resigned. The work continued notwithstanding and with increased ardour. Not to antagonise unduly the landowners, the questions of tithes and compulsory labour (*hoveri*) were left in abeyance. The position of the peasant had now been completely revolutionised, though in his ignorance he refused to believe it.

The disgruntled nobility and landowners, the official doors closed to them, chose to air their grievances in the public press. Their protests only served to place in a stronger light the fairness of the Government's measures. As public protests served them nothing, 102 Jutland landowners presented a petition to the Crown Prince for the abolition of the new

ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE

measures as injurious to the country and contrary to the Constitution. "What is passed by Royal Order," retorted the Crown Prince, "cannot be changed." On the 31st July 1792 he laid the foundation of the Column of Liberty at Frihedstøtten, in the centre of Copenhagen. On one of its sides, stands the inscription: "The King had ordered the abolition of forced domicile so that the free peasant may take confidence, become enlightened, laborious, virtuous, an enlightened and happy citizen." The abolition of forced domicile, the adjustment of the relations between landlord and farmer, the conversion of the tithes—these sum up the major achievements of the Government in their work for the alleviation of the peasant class. One of the few privileges that remained to the nobility was the right of appointment to ecclesiastical and judicial posts. In 1809 the privilege was changed into a "right of presentation" to which many reservations were attached. Another privilege, that of exemption from taxes, rested on immemorial rights and could not be fully removed; but landowners from the year 1793 were made to share with the peasants the responsibility for constructing the royal roads and bridges.

The same humane spirit that guided the Government in their dealings with the rural classes showed itself in the abolition of the slave trade in 1792, which came into effect in the Danish West Indies a few years later. Denmark was the first nation to give this humane example to the world, and England the first to follow it. Denmark showed the same spirit of toleration in her treatment of the Jews. The first move was made at the end of the eighteenth century, when Jews were admitted to the Corporations. It was not until the year 1814 that they were allowed admittance to all professions "authorised by the law."

Those who had brought freedom to the rural classes were equally alive to the necessity of raising them to the intellectual level of other classes. The year after the abolition of forced domicile, a special committee was appointed to promote the building of rural schools throughout Denmark. As the result, teachers were lodged gratuitously, were given lands and revenues, and their status generally improved. In the towns

EDUCATION AND CULTURE

as well as in the country districts children received free instruction, and it was an obligation for parents, who had not the means to educate their children, to send them to school. Through the zealous efforts of the two brothers Christian and Ludwig Reventlow, special attention was given to primary instruction, and Sunday schools were established in Copenhagen. It was left to a later age to satisfy the need of higher education in the schools.

The latter half of the eighteenth century could also pride itself on a greater improvement in secondary education in the University and High Schools. The ancient classics remained the basis of instruction in the Latin schools, but many new subjects of study were introduced. The University was reorganised to conform to the needs of the time. In 1785 it received new statutes and its membership was increased by the appointment of additional professors paid by the State. The long-nourished scheme of a separate University in Norway was accomplished in 1811 by the foundation of the University of Christiania a few years before the separation of Norway from Denmark. Science and learning also benefited from the opening of an Academy of Surgery and of the great Royal Library to which the public were admitted in 1793. These years were fecund in the production of distinguished men who were able to exercise an influence on intellectual development. It was in her most disastrous years that the intellectual life of Denmark was illumined by poets and dramatists of no mean distinction. As a lyrist and moving interpreter of northern romance, Johannes Ewald had no equal in his time. In style and language his dramas are Shakespearian, as in "Balders Death," or assume the form of French tragedy. His worthiest successor was Jens Baggesen, who excelled as satirist and rhetorician. It took him a long time to free himself of the influence of the German school. He was at his best in depicting the small things of life. Romanticism he could never understand, and as a writer without principles he defies criticism. There was to arise a greater genius in Adam Öhlenschläger, who for versatility eclipsed all previous writers. He was steeped in the romantic school in Denmark, but was entirely free from the overstrung sentimentalism of the German

RATIONALISM

and Swedish writers. In exquisite but simple phrases he opened the eyes to what is great and beautiful in human nature. The end of the century gave birth to the pathetic figure of Steensen Blicher, whose living stories of Danish peasant life have an enduring popularity. He was essentially a realist and never idolised his characters, which were allowed to speak for themselves. In his own words, he would be "rather naive than comic."

Public opinion and the Danes' general outlook on life passed through many changing phases in the period between the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. At the beginning the nation was enjoying the fruits of a peaceful epoch when there were few who were not enjoying the benefits of commercial prosperity. This sense of security made them insensible to foreign influences. They would at one moment grow exultant over French republicanism and in another moment feel the happier for being subject to an autocrat and to absolute monarchy. The young Crown Prince was loved by all because he threw himself wholeheartedly into the spirit of the times. Club life, hitherto unknown, was a symbol of social ease and content. The nation as a whole felt so secure in its own sphere that it paid but passing attention to affairs at home and abroad. Such encroachments on private liberty as the muzzling of the Press merely ruffled the surface of self-content. The only sign of discontent showed itself in a revolt against the growing influence of the German element in the country which was composed partly of noble families from Holstein and partly of German tradesmen who amassed riches in Copenhagen.

Though the conservatism of the Church still preserved some of its silent powers, it was not surprising that the easy flow of life awakened in general no conscious need of the consolation of a revealed religion. It was in a sense a revolt against religious persecution and rigid formulas. Serious religious belief was replaced by stolid indifference and scepticism. From this it can be understood that the Danes, including the Court and high society, fell under the spell of rationalism which, born in England and developed in France, found its final home in Germany. The denial of Christian truths

GERMAN INFLUENCE IN SCHLESWIG

and dogmas was common to all classes of the community. The more enlightened, rather than forgo every claim to respectability, left dogmas aside and fell back on morality as sufficient to lead a man into an honest and happy life. The average parson, who was forced by circumstances to "climb down" in his religious practices, treated his congregation to empty platitudes and ignored dogmas.

Frederick VI had only been prevented by the recurrence of wars from countermining German influence in Schleswig. It might have been successfully arrested by Frederick IV but for his failure to take effective measures for the protection of his oppressed subjects after the reunion of that province to Denmark. When Frederick VI finally set himself to the task, the Danish idiom still held its ground in Schleswig and was almost universally in use between the frontier of Jutland and the Gulf of Schleswig. But the German language was used in schools, churches and in all branches of the administration in the middle and southern part of Schleswig, and from the year 1768 attendance at the University of Kiel had been made compulsory for all students. The stubbornness with which German trained teachers attacked the Danish language in all the schools towards the end of the eighteenth century was more than Frederick VI could tolerate. On the 15th December 1810 he addressed a letter to the Chancery of Schleswig-Holstein declaring his intention to prohibit the use of the German language in Divine Service, in schools and in the administration of justice, and to replace it by the Danish language in all parts of Schleswig where it was the current language. He ordered all the local officials to draw up reports on the existing conditions in their districts; but his good intentions were paralysed by the German officials. It was something in his favour that Danish became a subject of instruction in the secondary, superior and primary schools in the towns of Schleswig.

Not without reason Danish statesmen, at the end of the century, began to brood over the possibility of the separation of Holstein from Schleswig. Danish law, in force in Schleswig, allowed succession to the female descendants of the Sovereign if there was no male heir. In Holstein the old Salic law

was in force. There the right of succession was not confined to the successors of Frederick, but embraced the whole Oldenburg line. To assure the Holstein succession to the Danish Kingdom, and in the belief that Frederick VI would have no heirs, A. P. Bernstorff arranged the marriage, as already stated, of Louise Augusta who, as the King's sister, was the next heir to Denmark and Schleswig under Danish law, with Duke Frederick Christian of Augustenborg, who was the next heir to Holstein. Bernstorff's scheme miscarried because Prince Frederick married and begot two sons and a daughter, Louise Charlotte, who, through her marriage to the Landgrave of Hesse, became mother to Queen Louise of Denmark who was married to Christian IX.

At the beginning of the 'eighties, Gustavus III of Sweden was carefully concealing his plan to take Copenhagen by surprise, and the plan received a further impetus when it was known that there was a cooling in the relations between Denmark and Russia. To the misfortune of Gustavus, Catherine II in 1783 got wind of his plan and warned him in sarcastic tones that an attack on Denmark would be tantamount to a declaration of war on Russia. A few years later, Gustavus, egged on by personal ambition and the lust for conquest, provoked a new crisis. His adventurous mind wandered over many spheres of conquest. There was Catherine of Russia who was being dragged into a war with the Turks. What if he seized the occasion to attack Russia? He made his decision in 1788. His choice of Russia as his opponent was dictated as much by political unrest in his own country as by his boundless ambitions. He hoped that the laurels of victory would retrieve his weakened position in Sweden. For Denmark the rupture of peace awakened serious misgivings. A Swedish victory over Russia, unlikely but not impossible, would make room for the conquest of Norway; a Russian victory, on the other hand, would give Catherine II the lead in the North. Bernstorff essayed in vain to restrain Gustavus and to smooth relations with Russia. He was merely reminded by the Empress of the Danish-Russian alliance of 1773.¹ A refusal of assistance to Russia

¹ See page 292.

TREATY OF VÄRÄLÄ

was therefore not denied, but he took care that it was reduced to a minimum. Norway had lately been appeased by the concession of the free import of corn.

With an ill-equipped force of 12,000 Norwegians, Prince Charles of Hesse, who had not set his foot in Norway for fifteen years, crossed the Swedish frontier on the 24th September 1788. The Crown Prince accompanied him as a volunteer. An encounter with the Swedes at Quistrumbro ended in an easy victory for the Norwegians. The war was of the nature of an *opera comique*. A few hours before its outbreak, Swedish officers were seen dining with Prince Charles; on their return they found the Norwegian troops in hot pursuit of the Swedish corps. The final curtain fell when, at the moment that Gothenburg was to be taken by the Norwegians, England intervened and insisted on the cessation of hostilities. Soon afterwards the Norwegian troops withdrew over the frontier. Russia was justly embittered and demanded that Denmark should reopen operations. With the Russo-Swedish Treaty of Peace, which was signed at Värälä in 1790, the war was ended, and with the death of Gustavus III in 1792 the political fires that had threatened to envelop all Scandinavia were happily extinguished.

The difficulties which Denmark had to fight against in the new complications which arose in the North after the end of the Russo-Swedish war stood in close relation to the events that followed the French Revolution. As Bernstorff was an aristocrat at heart and therefore as much inimical to the spirit of the Revolution as the Crown Prince himself, they could face the situation with the same cold-blooded resolution. In striking contrast to the cautious attitude of Bernstorff was the determination of Gustavus III to take sides with the Royalist cause in France. Denmark resolved to maintain her traditional neutrality and refused to join in a common fight against the Revolution, despite the fact that England, in contravention of the Dano-English contraband agreement of 1780, arrested during the 'nineties a number of Danish and Norwegian ships who were bringing corn and other materials to France. In the first disturbed years Bernstorff directed his policy towards a closer co-operation between the northern

TREATY OF ST. PETERSBURG

states, which was greatly facilitated after the death of Gustavus III. The two countries signed an agreement of neutrality in 1794 for the purpose of protecting their commerce against illegal interference. Each country pledged itself to arm eight ships of the line and an equal number of frigates.

At the beginning of the maritime war it was England who caused the most disturbance to Danish-Norwegian trade. But from 1797 England was in need of neutral shipping. When the English squadrons were compelled to leave the Mediterranean in 1796, it was to her advantage that the Levant trade should go over to the neutral countries. A signal departure from her previous attitude was her permission to neutrals to bring corn and other food materials to British ports. At the same time, Danish-Norwegian commerce and shipping could not escape wanton interference from French privateers. Any ship that carried goods from England or her Colonies was considered a lawful prize. Both Denmark and Sweden at the end of the century adopted the system of convoys as the only form of protection, with little idea that they would be put out of action when Napoleon, on becoming First Consul, held out the hand to the neutral States. England at once turned an unfriendly eye on the system of convoys. On the 25th July 1800 a Danish frigate, *Freja*, and a number of Danish merchant ships under convoy were seized in the Channel. To give added weight to their action, the British Government sent a squadron of nineteen warships unexpectedly to the Sound. Denmark was compelled to abandon convoys pending further negotiations and the frigate *Freja* was released after much hesitation. Denmark retaliated by accepting the proposal of the Emperor Paul for a neutrality convention between Russia and the Scandinavian countries. In December 1800 all these countries and Prussia signed a treaty at St. Petersburg which was a renewal of the agreement of 1780.

In London the renewal of the alliance was regarded as an unfriendly act, the more so because it was known that Napoleon hoped to reap all the advantages. In these circumstances it was risking much to conclude an alliance at a moment when England was only awaiting the opportunity to send a new

BATTLE OF COPENHAGEN, 1801

fleet into the Baltic. The alliance became a greater mockery when the Emperor Paul expelled the Danish Minister from St. Petersburg because he did not find the Danish Government sufficiently active. Denmark was made to pay for the Emperor's foolhardiness. Though the British Government did not declare war on the coalition from fear of offending Prussia, they laid an embargo on all allied ships and prepared for action. On the 12th March 1801 a British fleet of 53 vessels, including 20 ships of the line, commanded by Sir Hyde Parker with Nelson as second in command, sailed for the Baltic. At the same time England attempted to split up the alliance by offering peace to Denmark. The offer was rejected.

Copenhagen was not at the time in a good state of defence. The construction of the fort of Trekroner was not yet completed and her fleet was not fully armed. The city furnished 3,500 armed men and the students organised a volunteer corps. The Danish ships were manned by a little more than 5,000 men, and her ships and forts together could muster nearly 700 guns. When in sight of Copenhagen, the British fleet separated into two parts: one with 12 ships of the line with 1,200 guns and 9,000 men under Nelson was sent to attack the Danish ships and forts from the south; the other under Parker remained in reserve. Favoured by wind and weather Nelson opened the attack at 10 a.m. on 2nd April. At the end of three hours' indecisive fighting, Parker signalled to Nelson the order to retreat. Nelson turned his blind eye to the telescope and kept flying his battle signal, "Engage more closely." Although the eastern section of the Danish defence line was as good as destroyed, many of Nelson's ships found themselves in difficulties and many ran aground while exposed to the destructive firing of Trekroner. Despairing of a decisive victory, Nelson sent a message to the Crown Prince declaring that, unless the firing ceased, he would be "obliged to set on fire all the floating batteries he had taken, without having the power of saving the brave Danes who had defended them." The message was addressed to the "Brothers of Englishmen, the Danes." It may be doubted whether Nelson ever intended

DENMARK'S POSITION AS NEUTRAL POWER

to carry out this threat, but it had the desired effect on the Crown Prince, who, without consulting his commanding officer, Admiral Fischer, agreed to a truce of fourteen weeks during which Denmark consented to take no active part in armed neutrality. Matters took another turn when, a few days after the battle, the news came of the assassination of the Emperor Paul. If he had been killed a short time before, the fight might have been spared, for the first act of his successor, the Emperor Alexander, was to abandon the League of Armed Neutrality and sign a peace with England, which was extended later to all the Scandinavian Powers.

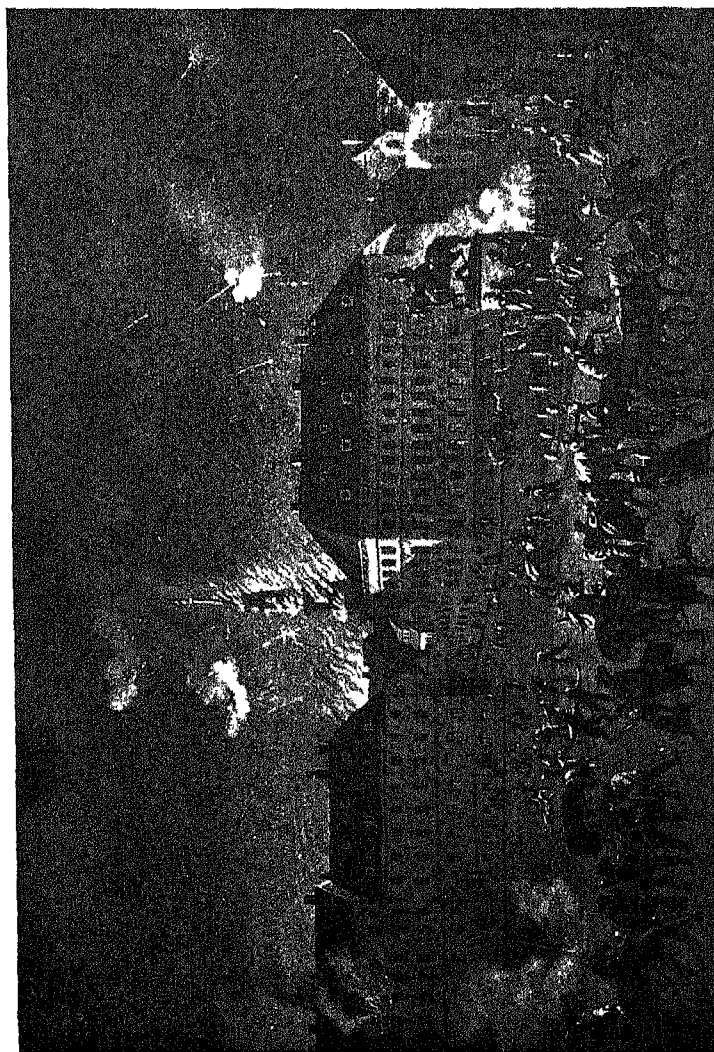
The mass of the Danish people clamoured for the continuance of operations, but the counsels of the peace party, led by Schimmelmann and the brothers Reventlow, prevailed. Denmark and England signed in 1801 a treaty of peace which eased in part the position of neutral shipping during the coming year. The air was frequently charged with rumours that Napoleon was about to enter the Duchies. Time after time Denmark was invited to join the European Coalition. When a French army entered Hanover in June 1803, a large Danish force was collected in Holstein. Two years later the southern frontier was guarded by 20,000 men. With nearly all Europe ablaze, Danish and Norwegian ships were enjoying the right conceded under the peace of 1801 of sailing from port to port along the coasts of the warring nations. In the first years both England and France left neutral trade in peace. When the war generated into a fight for life and death between England and France, the increased blockading of foreign harbours and coasts by England seriously affected neutral trade and navigation. In spite of the promises of 1801, England forbade all neutral shipping between enemy ports. From this moment the commercial policy of Denmark and Norway was eyed with suspicion by England.

That Denmark had hitherto refrained from taking her place amongst the enemies of France was due to the vacillating attitude of the Court in Berlin. In the year 1806 a Prussian army corps was driven north and besieged in Lübeck. From the summer of 1807 it was increasingly difficult for Denmark to preserve neutrality. Nothing could be more unfortunate than

WAVERING ATTITUDE OF DENMARK

that the Crown Prince in these critical times was staying near his army in Kiel with his Minister of Foreign Affairs, Christian Bernstorff, while the foreign policy of Denmark was being directed from Copenhagen. The country would have been better served if a commanding officer had been left in Holstein and the Crown Prince had remained in the capital. Yet Frederick's influence on affairs was as great when he was Crown Prince as when he became King on the death of his father Christian VII on the 13th March 1808.

It was the threat to her Mediterranean trade that most enraged Denmark against England. Rightly or wrongly, England interpreted Danish protests as an indication that Denmark was bent on a French alliance. There is evidence enough that in their hearts the Danes nurtured the greatest ill-will against Napoleon. Danish statesmen were carefully weighing their chances as the foes or friends of England. A war with France might place that country in the possession of the Duchies and some of the Danish islands. On the other hand, Zealand and the capital might be preserved and the union with Norway upheld if she could count on the assistance of the British fleet. From Sweden, the bitter enemy of France, there was nothing to be feared. With England as an enemy she risked losing her trade and her overseas colonies, and a separation from Norway would be inevitable. But a policy of doubt and procrastination reaped its reward when Canning was secretly informed that Russia and France as signatories of the Peace of Tilsit (1807) had resolved to invite Denmark, Sweden and Portugal to declare war on England. He also learnt wrongly through diplomatic channels that the Danish fleet was re-arming and that the Danish Government were being invited by France to allow the occupation of the Duchies by French troops. The position of Denmark was inordinately difficult, and the information she received from her representative in London did not suggest that England had any serious intentions of taking strong measures against her. There is no doubt that Canning was grossly misinformed in some particulars. For instance, the Danish fleet was lying peacefully in the harbour of Copenhagen quite unprepared for action, and there was nothing to substantiate the report



THE BOMBARDMENT OF COPENHAGEN IN THE NIGHT OF 4th AND 5th SEPTEMBER, 1807

View from the Kongens Lyngby

BOMBARDMENT OF COPENHAGEN

that French troops were about to occupy Holstein with Danish permission.

At the end of July 1807 England opened hostilities with the capture of Danish merchant ships and with the entry into the Sound of a fleet of 24 ships of the line and a number of frigates under the command of Admiral Gambier. A force of 31,000 men had been collected to land in Denmark. An English Minister demanded the immediate surrender of the Danish fleet, "because the British Government had been informed that it was to be ceded to France for use against England." The Danish Government, though forewarned of a coming attack, could only put forward a fighting force at Copenhagen of 5,500 regular and about 7,000 irregular troops. The flight of the Crown Prince to Holstein at this moment created an unhappy impression. With his usual ineptitude for choosing the right men, he selected the seventy-two-year-old General Peymann as the commander of the Danish forces.

The British demands having been formally rejected, as might have been expected of a spirited nation, Lord Cathcart's corps disembarked without resistance at Vedbaek, about 15 kilometres north of Copenhagen, and a few days later more troops arrived from Rügen. In the following weeks the British army moved slowly and cautiously towards the capital before laying siege to it. It could have been foreseen that the Danish militia, inexperienced and ill-armed, could make no stand against the trained soldiers commanded by Sir Arthur Wellesley. It was a sad reflection on the state of the Danish defences that the Crown Prince should be forced to send orders to the provincial authorities to obtain horses and every kind of weapon. The unfortunate General Castenskjold, in the execution of this painful task, wandered so far afield that he was forced to accept open battle against Wellesley's army with disastrous results.

On the 2nd of September Copenhagen was subjected to a terrific bombardment which lasted for three days. It is reckoned that on each successive night 4,000 projectiles were thrown into the city. More than 1,000 houses and public buildings were destroyed, including the University and the Tower of Our Lady's Church. The long bombardment broke

DENMARK JOINS FRANCE

the resistance of the defenders. On the 7th September General Peymann, pressed on all sides, decided to capitulate. The Danish fleet was surrendered and the citadel was occupied by the British during six weeks. A message from the Crown Prince, which ordered that the ships should be burnt, was intercepted. The captured vessels numbered 17 ships of the line, 12 frigates, 8 brigs and many smaller vessels. General Peymann and two other Generals were court-martialled by the Government and sentenced to death, but were subsequently pardoned.

Though the action was almost as strongly criticised in England as in Denmark, it would be difficult to challenge its necessity at a moment when England was fighting for her very existence and could not run the risk of leaving in Napoleon's hands a fleet of such strength. Canning now offered Denmark the choice of an alliance or the return to her former neutrality as the condition for the restoration of the fleet three years after the final peace. For Denmark there was no choice. Even if her statesmen had been able to remove the feelings of bitterness against England, a declaration of neutrality would be a dangerous expedient, and an alliance with England would expose her to the immediate danger of a French attack. Now that she had lost her fleet, the Danish islands would be an easy prey for Napoleon's legions. With a heavy heart Denmark laid her future in Napoleon's hands. War with England and participation in the French blockade of the continent, these were the prices paid by Denmark when she signed the Treaty of Fontainebleau on the 31st October 1807. Five days later Denmark declared war on England. As immediate reprisals England arrested 335 Danish merchant ships, occupied Heligoland, the Danish West Indies and Tranquebar. No one was more embittered against England than the Crown Prince. By his orders an embargo was laid on all English property and every Englishman was imprisoned.

On the false pretext of aiding Denmark to recover her lost provinces in Scania, Bernadotte entered the Jutish Peninsula with 23,000 men at the beginning of 1808. Together with 14,000 Danes he intended to cross the Great Belt and the Sound preparatory to a descent on Scania. An advance was,

FREDERICK'S DESIGNS ON SWEDISH THRONE

however, held back at Napoleon's orders and England seized the opportunity to send men-of-war to the Great Belt. A large part of Bernadotte's army consisted of Spaniards under the command of General de la Romana. On hearing that their countrymen had revolted against their new King, Joseph, Napoleon's brother, a large number of them succeeded in escaping on British ships. In deploying some of his troops in Jutland and Fünen, Napoleon had in mind the twofold object of affording them subsistence during the cold winter months and of providing a guarantee against Denmark, whom he always suspected of intriguing with England. In the spring of 1809 Napoleon withdrew the whole of his troops from Denmark because he had need of them elsewhere.

Relieved of this mill-stone, Sweden opened war on Norway and crossed her frontier. After a series of defeats inflicted by Prince Christian August, the commander of the Norwegian troops, further fighting was arrested by events in Sweden. Christian August, from ulterior motives, refused to obey the King's orders that he should advance on Gothenburg because, he said, the "Norwegian army was of an uncertain temper." One Swedish army was defending her western frontier while another in Scania was threatened by the Danes. The Swedish eastern front was menaced by the Russians who had invaded Finland. Alongside of these events, things were happening in Sweden which might have decisive results for the future of the northern countries. The madness and obstinacy of Gustavus IV in prolonging the war with Napoleon was driving his country into an abyss; the army and people were gradually awakening to the necessity of removing him from the throne. Having made safe the Norwegian frontier, the leader of the revolt, Colonel Adlersparre, advanced on Stockholm only to find that the King had already been made prisoner and deposed.

With the fall of Gustavus IV, Frederick spurred on his schemes for uniting Sweden to Denmark and Norway. But the march of events proved to him how shallow were his chances of election to the vacant throne. Popular feeling in Sweden was unfriendly to Denmark, most of all to her Constitution, and she had little faith in Frederick's personality

TREATY OF JÖNKÖPING

and statesmanship. The uncle of the deposed King, Charles XIII, was elected by the Diet at Örebro and the election of the heir-presumptive gave the final blow to Frederick's schemes. Secret agents were working to detach Norway from Denmark and unite her to Sweden, and to have elected as successor to Charles XIII Prince Christian August who had a great following in Norway. The Prince decided to step in where Frederick VI had failed, and his action was all the more reprehensible as the King had entrusted to him his own election to the Swedish throne. Christian August was duly elected as heir-presumptive on the 18th July 1809 but died a few months later.

Exhausted by her war with Russia which had cost her Finland, Sweden could think only of restoring her pre-war relations with Denmark which was attained in the Treaty of Peace signed at Jönköping (1809). Christian August evidently had an uneasy conscience for, in the few months that passed between his election and his death, he behaved loyally towards his former sovereign and refused to be a party to any attempt to alienate the Norwegians from Denmark. After his death Charles XIII and the Swedish people favoured the election of Frederick Christian of Augustenborg as his brother's successor, while Frederick VI wasted his time in an effort to gain support for his own candidature amongst influential circles in Sweden. But there appeared a new candidate in the person of Bernadotte, the Prince of Pontecorvo, who was unanimously elected Crown Prince by the Swedish Diet on the 21st August 1810.

The election as heir-apparent of such a person as Karl Johan, as Bernadotte was called in Sweden, was equivalent to a declaration of war on Denmark, which aimed at the annexation of Norway. Karl Johan had little sympathy for the aims of Sweden to recover Finland nor, in its designs on Norway, did he share the belief of the Swedes that the supposed discontent of the Norwegians with Danish rule, even if carefully fostered, was sufficient in itself. Wider premises dictated his policy. The end must be obtained with the approval of the Great Powers of Europe. Napoleon, with whom his relations had long been strained, showed no inclination to abandon Denmark and support Sweden's plans in the North. He even

DEFINITE ALLIANCE WITH FRANCE

occupied Swedish Pomerania. Real interests urged co-operation between Sweden and Russia. Napoleon's march on Moscow gave Karl Johan his opportunity. Already in April 1812 he and the Czar Alexander agreed that a Russo-Swedish army should make an attack on Zealand, compel the surrender of Norway and thereafter take part in the fight against Napoleon. When the Emperor Alexander signed this treaty, he had no knowledge that Denmark had simultaneously promised France to provide an army corps for the protection of the North German coast. Denmark finally linked her fate to that of Napoleon in a treaty of mutual assistance which was signed on the 12th July 1813. The Danish Army Corps that entered the field was commanded by Prince Frederick of Hesse, and was attached to the Army of Marshal Davout.

Up to the last Frederick VI was convinced of Napoleon's ultimate triumph, and it was not until the beginning of 1813 that his Foreign Secretary, Niels Rosenkrantz, seriously suspected that Prussia, after overthrowing Napoleon, would turn against Jutland, that the Swedes would attack Norway, and that England desired to break up the Danish monarchy. Without a doubt Frederick had underestimated the strength of the Russo-Swedish alliance. Yet European diplomacy was far from taking it for granted that the loss of Norway would be the final result. Denmark might have been in a different position if she had not repeatedly rejected the demands of the Great Powers that she should abandon Napoleon. Frederick's alliance with Napoleon in 1813 was as unnecessary as it was disastrous.

After the Battle of Leipzig, the Danish army in Germany had to save itself by a hasty retreat, pursued, as it was, by an immensely superior army of Germans, Swedes and Russians. Bernadotte now began to think of his own interests. After abandoning the pursuit of the French, he turned towards the Danish frontier with an army of 50,000 men. His German divisions were under the command of General Walmoden. On the 7th December 1813 the rearguard of the Danish army was fighting the Swedes at Bornhöved. After crossing the Eider, its retreat to Rendsborg was threatened by Walmoden. The only line of retreat lay through Sehested, and it was here

PEACE OF KIEL

that the Danes succeeded on 10th December in holding and defeating the advancing army. A safe retreat to Rendsborg was then assured. While Walmoden was crossing the Eider the Danish forces were entering Rendsborg.

The bulk of the Danish forces under the King's command was concentrated in Fünen, burning with the desire to repeat the victory of Sehested and to make a final desperate attempt to prevent the dismemberment of the monarchy. But nothing was done. Frederick VI had lost all his self-confidence and was frightened of making decisions at a moment when his country was a playground for the statesmen of Austria, Russia and Sweden. Through his representative, Bombelles, Metternich tried to persuade Frederick to surrender the diocese of Trondhjem to Sweden. Even if the King had been willing to accept the proposal, the decisions of Russia and Sweden would have been final. The Emperor Alexander, who was wavering between the fulfilment of his past promises to Sweden and an attachment to Denmark, finally decided that the claims of Karl Johan, as the loyal supporter of the Coalition, were the greater. Now that the further prosecution of the war was an impossibility, Denmark had no alternative but to conclude peace.

The peace Treaty with Sweden and England was signed at Kiel on the 14th January 1814. Under its terms the King of Denmark renounced in favour of the King of Sweden and his successors his right to the kingdom of Norway and surrendered Heligoland to England. The King of Sweden undertook to respect the existing laws, rights, privileges and freedoms of Norwegian subjects. In return for the acquisition of Norway, the King of Sweden renounced in favour of the King of Denmark all rights to Swedish Pomerania and the Island of Rügen.¹ Furthermore, Denmark undertook to enter the coalition against France whilst Sweden offered to pay Denmark, 1,000,000 Swedish riksdaler towards the expense of equipping an army corps. Iceland, the Faroe Islands and Greenland remained with Denmark. In a farewell declaration to the Norwegian people Frederick VI used these words: "Never could We,

¹ In June 1815 Denmark ceded Swedish Pomerania and Rügen to Prussia in exchange for the small Duchy of Lauenburg.

LOSS OF NORWAY

never will We forget the loyalty and respect for Us and Our Royal House, of which the noble Norwegian race in all times and circumstances has given such touching proofs. . . . Our sincere wish is that good fortune and peace may always be the lot of the brave and noble Norwegian people." Thus was ended the union between Denmark and Norway which had lasted more than 400 years.

It is difficult to believe that the union between Norway and Denmark could have been indefinitely preserved and that, viewing the change in Norwegian feeling during the nineteenth century, the continuance of a political union would have been to the benefit of either side. Denmark's one-sided interest in the Schleswig-Holstein question was in itself a proof that their interests were not always the same. Both countries had reason to congratulate themselves that the separation had been induced by foreign causes and that it therefore did not evoke feelings of disloyalty or wound the sensibilities of two brotherly nations. It could only be regretted that the chapter ended with the refusal of the monarch to fight a last fight for their common freedom.

Added to her foreign embarrassments was Denmark's inability to restore her financial position until the years 1825-30. Only by the most dubious transactions could she finance her wars. During the Seven Years' War (1807-14) the needs of the State increased at the same time as revenues decreased. Taxes and loans, foreign and interior, were not enough to stem the tide. The only way of meeting immediate needs was to raise one loan after another issued by the country's bank without real security and in the form of bank-notes. A rapid fall in the exchange was the inevitable result and foreign exchange became the subject of speculation which the Government was powerless to check. In 1812 the State, having lost all control of the situation, went bankrupt. By an Order of the 5th January 1813 all the old banks were closed down and a Government Bank established, which provided the country with new money. The Government hoped that this new measure would help to balance the revenue and expenditure of the State. Their optimism was short-lived. Although they were ready to pawn the Crown Jewels, it was still impos-

COMMERCIAL CRISIS

sible to raise a foreign loan. All classes of the people viewed with suspicion the new currency and tried to pass it on to other hands. It is said that many commercial houses, in order to help the Government, plastered the walls of their offices with bank-notes. In the year 1818 the bank was converted into a "National Bank" with a directorate independent of the Government and with funds raised from taxes on land property.

It was a lamentable fact that the years that led to the separation of Norway and Denmark marked also the end of a period of commercial prosperity. Many years were to pass before Copenhagen could again raise its head as an important trading city. The Asiatic Company had met with such colossal losses by the time that peace returned that it was almost beyond recovery, nor did the attempts to create national industries bear any fruit. The temporary eclipse of Copenhagen did not benefit the provincial towns. On the contrary, they became the commercial breeding-ground for the Hamburger merchant. Without the possession of credit in Hamburg, no merchant in Jutland could conduct business. From the West came an inrush of English industrial wares, the cheapness of which cut out home industries. The saying in 1807 was that "the big merchant is so English-minded that he wants nothing better than to be under English rule." No one was more disappointed when Denmark in the same years rejected England's peace overtures. During the years of war Denmark to a large extent owed her means of subsistence to privateers, smugglers and to contraband.

While the town merchant was eking out a precarious living, the agriculturalist was enriching himself during the war on high prices. He paid taxes ungrudgingly. To be sure he had to pay high prices for the goods he bought, but his needs were small. By selling a couple of cows or horses the peasant farmer could purchase his freedom. On the other hand, the new landowner who was recruited from the towns and had made his fortune in prosperous times, buying a property with his savings, was in a very sore plight.

If the politicians were preparing peacefully for the future, it was not so with the religious world. The great revival of

MORAL EFFECTS OF THE WAR

religious sentiment in the years 1814 to 1830—it was a fight against rationalism—was due most of all to the dominating personality of Mynster, the Bishop of Zealand. So bitter was the struggle that many years passed before the Church could call itself orthodox. Able men were not lacking in the difficult years that followed the Treaty of Kiel. In jurisprudence, A. S. Ørsted stood above all others. He joined a profound juridical knowledge to a philosophical education. The country was also to benefit from his statesman-like gifts. Natural sciences were honoured by the name of H. C. Ørsted, who earned world-wide fame by his discovery of electro-magnetism. He was the guiding spirit in the creation of the Polytechnical School in 1829. Social and political progress found its wisest protagonist in J. F. Schouw who, though by profession a botanist, presented many of the qualities of a statesman: a practical mind, a resolute character, and withal a modest and unpretentious being.

Just as the trials of the battlefield bring in their train incalculable reversals of former conceptions of life, so it was with Denmark through her long period of wars which opened with the Battle of Copenhagen of 1801. This earliest ordeal seemed to arouse from their depths all the virile forces inherent in the nation. Heroic exploits convinced the masses that the fires of patriotism which had inflamed their ancestors were still burning in their descendants. A spiritual awakening came from the writings of Øhlenschläger and Henrik Steffens; the first uplifted the nation by the brilliancy of his poetry in which he painted the original life of the North; Steffens was more the interpreter of the new spirit and the new epoch. It was also a time when a new philosophy and a new literature was spreading from Germany. The misfortunes of war and a disastrous peace changed nothing in this respect. When the situation seemed the most desperate, the Danes dug their minds in the memories of the past in contemplation of its most brilliant chapters. A religious revolution could not be expected until the clergy, trained and fashioned under the influence of rationalism, were supplanted by those of a later generation.

BOOK IV
THE CONSTITUTIONAL ERA

CHAPTER XIX

DENMARK'S enfeeblement after the loss of Norway was a natural temptation to Germany, now an independent nation, to encroach on the preserves of Schleswig-Holstein with the object of establishing a political union between the two Duchies. The movement drew its biggest flames from the University of Kiel and the "Order of Knights" which was a private body inside the nobility and possessed no authority for demanding a common Constitution. Taking his stand on the Treaty of Vienna, Frederick VI was firm in rejecting these ill-founded pretensions and reminded them pointedly that none but he had the right to decide the time and the character of a Constitution for Holstein and that what had been conceded at the Congress of Vienna bore no relation to Schleswig which was an integral part of the Danish monarchy. In retaliation the Order refused to pay taxes and, in order to protect themselves against seizures of property, formed a society of "mutual economic assistance." This society was promptly dissolved by the King. In 1822 the Order appealed to the German Federal Diet for the approval of a common Constitution for the Duchies which, they pretended, was already in existence. As might be expected, the Diet rejected the petition on the ground that the Constitution was no longer in force and referred them as loyal subjects to the King's undertakings to grant a constitution at the proper time. The Diet further declared that it regarded Schleswig as lying outside its competence. Political strife then ceased and during the next eight years no more was heard of a Constitution either for Schleswig or Holstein.

The situation might have remained stationary but for the July Revolution in France (1830), the ferment of which spread to parts of Germany and then to Holstein. At the same moment there appeared on the scene the sensational figure

of Uwe Lornsen who, saturated with German nationalistic ideas, inflamed opinion by the publication of a pamphlet on a free Constitution for Schleswig and Holstein. In it he recommended common representation for the two Duchies with the right to vote laws and taxes, the centralisation of administration in Kiel, and a Personal Union between the Kingdom and the Duchies. Recoiling with horror at the prospect of a Constitution which, in Lornsen's own words, would benefit the lower classes, the nobility in Holstein reaffirmed their loyalty to the King. Legal action was taken against Lornsen whose *naïveté* paid the penalty of imprisonment.

It was impossible, however, to ignore the popular excitement aroused by Lornsen's pamphlet, and Frederick, bowing to popular pressure, declared in 1831 his intention of setting up separate Provincial Assemblies in Schleswig and Denmark similar to those existing in Prussia. Now that the nobility was in an amenable state of mind, it seemed a heaven-sent opportunity for forestalling the revival of the claim for a joint Constitution. Under a Decree of 15th May 1834 it was decided to set up four consultative Chambers sitting at Roskilde, Viborg, Schleswig and Itzehoe. Ironically enough, a king who had consistently refused to favour a political union between the two provinces committed himself to a measure which encouraged the champions of unity. In a number of Ordinances he pledged himself to the formation of a common government for the Duchies and a common Court of Appeal in Kiel. The King believed that those instruments would strengthen his power to tighten in one grasp all lands from the Skaw to the Elbe.

The doors of the Palace of Roskilde, which admitted the members of the Assembly to their first meeting on 1st October 1835, were opened to a new era of political life in Denmark. It should be noted, however, that their powers were purely consultative. They were to "provide the King and his successors with the full knowledge of everything that could contribute to the welfare of his dear and faithful subjects." They had the right to examine and discuss all laws, present petitions, draw up laws and submit complaints on the abuses and mal-

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES

administration of existing laws. Some of the members received their appointments direct from the King, but in most cases eligibility for election was attached to ownership of property. The meetings were held in private and only a brief summary of the proceedings were allowed to reach the public eye. It augured well for its beginnings and for moderation in its labours that A. S. Ørsted, as an upholder of the liberty of the Press and a true servant of the King, should be appointed Royal Commissioner for the Assemblies in Roskilde and Viborg. It was only of passing importance that the Assembly's message of thanks to the King ended with these words : " It is with joy and pride that the people can say that Denmark's heart beats in your Majesty's breast."

It could be expected that the Assembly would concern itself first with the state of the country's finances. One of the earliest acts of the Assembly was to petition the King to publish the official accounts and to appoint a commission, not only composed of Government officials, to make recommendations for the amelioration of the finances. Economies were demanded in expenditure on the Royal Household, the Army, foreign representation and pensions. As the Royal reply failed to give satisfaction, the petition was renewed at the next meeting. The Assembly showed further its independence in resisting stubbornly the Government's scheme for further restricting the liberty of the Press. The open indignation of a large circle of educated men at this infringement on their liberty only led to further persecutions and, despite the protests of the Assemblies of Roskilde and Viborg, the Government introduced an Ordinance in 1837 which extended the arm of the law to offences committed by the Press under the heading of " unwarranted disrespect."

Few of the reforms that were debated in the first session of the Assemblies became law. The value of their achievements lay in the wide field of exploratory work. The nation derived most satisfaction from the Municipal Law of the 24th October 1837, which gave a proportionate number of citizens in the market towns the freedom to elect their own representatives to the municipality. Previously they had been forced to choose amongst those who had been selected by the

CHRISTIAN VIII

magistrate, himself a royal nominee. At this time conditions in the provincial towns, most of them small and impoverished, were exceedingly primitive ; only twenty of them were provided with street lights ; the rest lived in darkness. Less fruitful were the attempts to remove the evil of villeinage which was still prevalent in Denmark. The Government, while acknowledging that its existence was irreconcilable with the times, maintained that it was a matter for friendly agreement between the land-owners and the villeins. This method was more and more used in the following years when the peasants were enjoying better times.

Frederick VI, after a long and serious illness, died on the 3rd December 1839, after being Regent and King for fifty-five years. His noble, sincere and loyal personality endeared him to his people and this affection survived all the vicissitudes of his reign : on one side the events which led to the dismemberment of Denmark : on the other side the important reforms which laid the foundations of political freedom.

Yet there were many who felt relief at the departure of Frederick VI and the advent of Christian VIII to the throne. He came to it with the reputation of a trained administrator and of one long immersed in State affairs. Add to this a fine presence, and he seemed to have the makings of a promising Sovereign, and of one particularly fitted to live and rule according to the times. In his second marriage he was happily united to Caroline Amalie of Augustenborg, a niece of Frederick VI and a lady of religious habits. It was thought an easy task to bring over the new King to the liberal ideas which had made so little appeal to his predecessor. Yet the veiled promises made by Christian in his opening proclamation to the nation, which foreshadowed no more than an improvement in the administration, conveyed no indication that he could be lightly led in the paths of liberalism. The people expected not so much a change in the administration as a change in the Constitution, a faith founded on the fact that it was under Christian's brief government that Norway had in 1814 obtained a Constitution that put an end to absolute monarchy. They were unaware that the King's political vision had undergone a considerable change since his days in

THE LIBERAL PARTY

Norway and that this change was due to his association with the leading Conservative statesmen in Europe during his late travels abroad. Christian VIII was in reality a born aristocrat.

Suspicious and distrustful of the intentions of the new King, the people, supported by the Press and the Assemblies, demanded a Constitution similar to the Norwegian one. The University students were the first to elicit from their sovereign an avowal of the limits to which he would go in meeting the popular demands. They were advised to be content with the advance already made in the previous reign and were told that the Norwegian Constitution had only been introduced in "very exceptionable circumstances." It was little testimony to the King's grasp of realities that he failed to understand that the students' address, which was followed by similar appeals from all parts of the country, represented the voice of the most advanced part of the people. Christian VIII was content to rule with the assistance of the former Ministers and the Council of State composed of elderly gentlemen whose ages averaged seventy years.

The first meetings of the two Assemblies at Roskilde and Viborg in the new reign were the prelude to a definite rupture between the King and the Liberals. The Assemblies were inundated with petitions demanding that the two bodies should be united in one and that this one Assembly should have the right to vote taxes; other petitions went further in demanding that this right should be exercised by the representatives of the whole country, including Schleswig. In an address to the King, the Assemblies pressed for a single Assembly and demanded the publicity of meetings, changes in the Electoral Law and the presentation of a biennial budget. Christian replied by threatening the petitioners with legal prosecution unless they withdrew their demands.

In 1841 the Liberal Party united all its forces. It had full command over the principal towns, the University and the upper middle classes, whose popular leader was young Orla Lehmann. The Press was in open revolt against further inroads on its freedom and popular feeling ran high when Lehmann was sentenced to imprisonment for having attempted, in defence of the peasant classes, to "spread hatred" against

ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

Denmark's absolute Constitution. On his release, the burghers of Copenhagen made him their Vice-President and the peasants of Falster presented him with a gold box.

While persisting in his refusal to permit a change in the Constitution, Christian VIII behaved contrariwise in his reorganisation of the administration. Counted in numbers his administrative reforms provided a very handsome record for a reign of eight years. The finances of the State were his first concern and the old grievance over the failure to publish accounts of public expenditure was removed by the introduction of a regular budget. Most important of the reforms were those that established self-government in the municipalities. It had already been granted to the provincial towns under the Municipal Law of 1837; four years later parish and county councils were set up all over the country. Copenhagen had a new representative body headed by an Over-President and three burgomasters, all appointed by the King. In introducing the army reforms of 1842, absolute monarchy was forging a weapon that was to be used a few years later in a fight for the possession of Schleswig. It was a smaller but a more efficient force: senior officers were removed and their place taken by a younger generation of officers who had been trained in the military high school. In 1845 Denmark sold to England Tranquebar and in 1849 the forts on the Guinea Coast which were of no real value to her. Also the Danish Dependencies were to benefit by Christian's reforms. The Icelandic Althing, which had been abolished in 1800, was re-established in 1843 and Reykjavik made the Capital.

Christian VIII showed himself as unbending in the treatment of national-political affairs as in his attitude towards the Constitution. To him the kingdom that he had inherited was a sacred and untouchable legacy; to preserve the monarchy in its entirety, he must do justice to both nationalities. The leaders of the Schleswig-Holstein movement were the two brothers, Duke Christian of Augustenborg and Prince Frederick of Nör. The former flattered his vanity by placing on his head the crown of the future State and declared himself heir-pretendant in the event of the extinction of the royal

dynasty on the agnatic side as then seemed possible. Prince Frederick worked unceasingly for a common Assembly for Schleswig and Holstein, rejoiced in calling Denmark a foreign country and refused all rights to the Danish language. In this disquieting atmosphere Christian VIII made the costly mistake of appointing him Governor and Commander-in-Chief in the Duchies. On the Prince's recommendation, two Holstein nobles, the brothers Joseph and Henry Reventlow Criminil, were taken into the Government, the one as President of the Schleswig-Holstein Chancery and the other as Minister for Foreign Affairs. The consequences of these grave errors of judgment were not slow in asserting themselves.

In the 'forties the Schleswig question entered on another phase. South Jutland could be figuratively described as a Danish body in foreign clothing. Self-development had been hindered by the dual submission to a system of absolute monarchy and to the arrogant rule of foreign officials. Only one instance need be cited. At the meeting of the Schleswig Assembly in 1842, Peter Hjort Lorenzen in an eloquent speech demanded the right of the Danish members to speak in their own language. For his temerity he was ordered by the President to quit the Assembly. The Royal Commissioner did nothing to protect Lorenzen from this act of violence. The King, by his Letters Patent of the 14th May 1840, had attempted to propitiate both parties in establishing Danish as the language of the tribunals and of the administration in North Schleswig; yet it was now ordered that the German language should be used in the Assembly by all members who were able to speak it. It was self-evident that this gesture would appease neither the loyal Schleswigers nor the German element in the Duchy which aimed at nothing less than the disintegration and dismemberment of the Danish monarchy with a view to the formation of a separate State of Schleswig-Holstein. The most practical method of achieving this end was the ruthless suppression of the Danish language.

The Assemblies in Roskilde and Viborg determined to take up a stand against these fulminating proceedings in the Duchies. Each addressed an appeal to the King to take

THE "OPEN LETTER" OF 1846

immediate steps for the protection of the Danish language in Schleswig. The Assembly in Roskilde acted (1844) with the greater determination. It petitioned the King to declare solemnly to his subjects that all parts of the Danish monarchy should be transmitted as an indivisible heritage according to the order of succession as established by the "Royal Law," and to take effective steps for putting an end to anti-unitarian intrigues. On hearing that this petition had obtained the approval of the Royal Commissioner, the Diet sitting at Itzehoe voted an address to the King declaring that "the Duchies were independent States, that they were governed by the agnatic line, and that they were closely united the one to the other." No sooner was this declaration published than the Municipality of Copenhagen represented to the King in the name of the country the dangers of the situation and invited him to take serious measures for the security of the State, declaring finally that the Danish nation would never tolerate the separation of Schleswig from the kingdom.

Hitherto the King had been unmoved by any of the petitions and addresses of the Assemblies which he considered to be outside their functions, but he was so much perturbed by the new turn of events that he decided to make a move in the matter of the succession that would both appease his subjects and damp the ardour of the Augustenborgs. In his Letters Patent of the 8th July 1846, generally known as the "Open Letter," the King declared that, in order to counter false ideas on the order of succession, he had been advised to make the following declaration. From the examination of official documents it was clearly and unquestionably proved that the same order of succession was in force in Schleswig and the kingdom; in consequence he and his successors to the throne regarded it as their duty to preserve the union between the two parts of the monarchy. As to some parts of Holstein, he added, there was not the same certainty, but the main concern of his Government should be to remove doubts and to assure the maintenance of the union of the diverse parts of the Danish monarchy by the same order of succession.

Whatever the exact meaning of this declaration, it clearly

STRENGTH OF NATIONAL LIBERALS

refuted the pretensions of the Augustenborgs and of the Schleswig-Holstein party. The Diet in Holstein, ignoring an intimation that the King would refuse to receive any petitions on the act of succession, drew up an insolent and menacing address attacking the Royal declaration. Christian now broke with his habits and acted with the greatest resolution. Prince Frederick was relieved of all his appointments. Joseph Reventlow was deprived of his office as President of the German Chancery and six members of the Government of Holstein were dismissed. L. N. Scheele was placed at the head of the new Government and Karl Moltke appointed President of the Schleswig-Holstein Chancery. In Germany, the year 1846 was regarded as the decisive year for Schleswig-Holsteinism.

The elections to the States Assemblies in 1847 strengthened the position of the National Liberals, particularly in the capital. The Liberals had become "National" in 1842 when Orla Lehmann for the first time advocated the Eider policy; Schleswig must either belong to Germany or to Denmark. The "Society of Peasants", a new organisation which had grown into a constituent body of electors under Balthazar Christensen and J. A. Hansen presented their candidates for the first time. They demanded general conscription, free internal trade, the transfer of tenancy to ownership of land and the appointment of an Agricultural Commission to discuss the emancipation of the peasant class. Christian himself had become constitutionally minded and was preparing the framework of a Liberal Constitution when he passed away on the 20th January 1848.

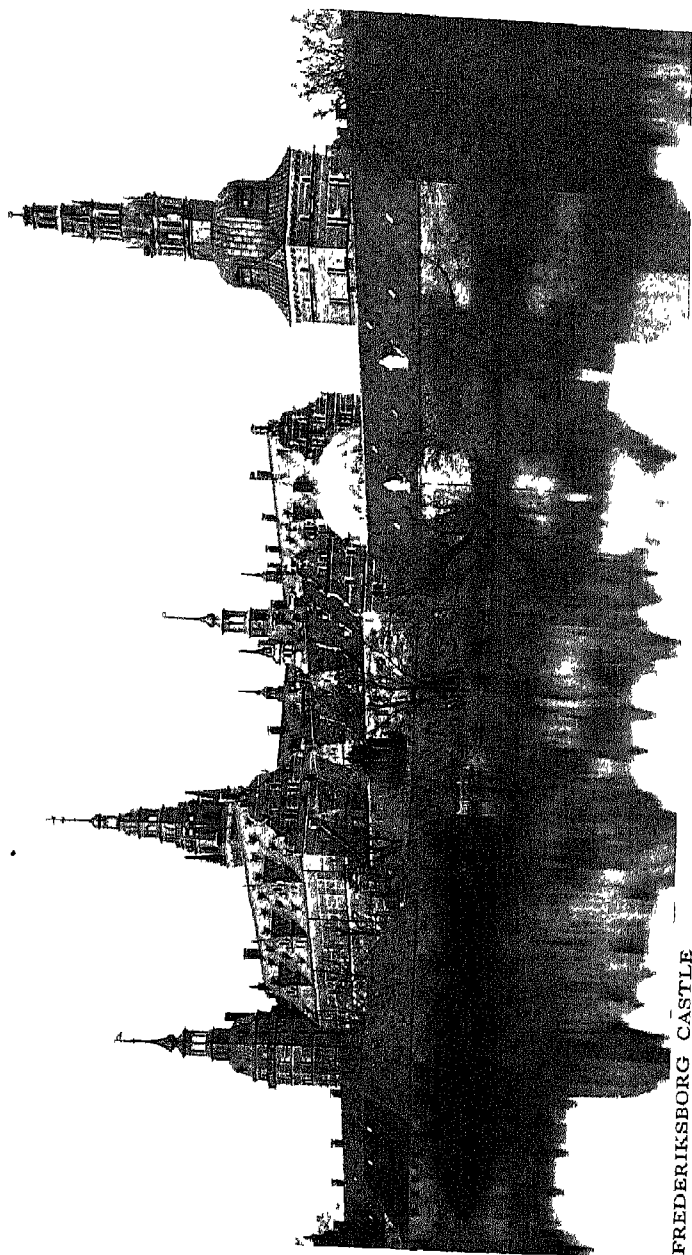
This was largely a reign of lost opportunities. Christian VIII could hardly be censured for failing to grant at the beginning of his reign a Constitution based on universal suffrage because at that time it formed no part of the Liberal programme. But it is open to question whether he would not have been better advised in granting at the beginning a Constitution which would have satisfied the majority of his subjects. The fact remains that the years between 1830 and 1848 were the most eventful and decisive in laying the foundations of present-day life in Denmark. It was also during

CHRISTIAN VIII

these years that there arose the conscious need for closer co-operation between northern countries. A natural born sentiment springing from the recognition of a common parentage needed a special impulse to make it rise to the surface. Öhlenschläger's poems, which were read in every northern country, had already struck a common cord. It took on a more practical form at a meeting of Scandinavian naturalists in Copenhagen and quickly spread to the students of all the Universities. In 1848, when Denmark was struggling against the domination of Germany, many young men of Sweden and Norway were fighting at the side of the Danes.

Frederick VII was the only son of Christian VIII by his first marriage with Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. It was the misfortune of Frederick that the early dissolution of this marriage left him without a mother's care. Nor is it improbable that the neglect of his childhood contributed to his own unlucky adventures in the matrimonial field. His first marriage to Princess Wilhelmina, the youngest daughter of Frederick VI, ended abruptly and his second marriage with Princess Mariane of Mecklenburg-Strelitz also ended in a divorce. His matrimonial life at an end, at least temporarily, he resided for several years in Fünen where he made the acquaintance of Carl Emil Bardenfleth who became his principal adviser in the difficult days that followed his accession. It was also during his residence in Fünen that he became enamoured of Louise Rasmussen, a former opera dancer, an unattractive but clever woman. There was general consternation when shortly after his accession she was established in the Royal Castle as his mistress.

As the instrument for bringing to life the Constitution which had been prepared by the late King, Frederick chose Karl Moltke, the President of the Schleswig-Holstein Chancery. Though loyal to the core, cool-headed and a believer in a closer understanding with Holstein, Moltke's own Holstein birth and his incomplete grasp of the new Liberal movement did not appear to fit in with his new responsibilities. On 28th January, ten days after Christian VIII's death, Frederick VII, from a sense of obedience to his late father, announced a new Constitution. It was to provide for a common Assembly



FREDERIKSBORG CASTLE

A NEW CONSTITUTION

for the kingdom and the Duchies which was to meet alternately at Copenhagen and Gottorp Castle. The Assembly was to consist of an equal number of deputies for the kingdom and the Duchies. It would be accorded full legislative powers in regard to finance and taxation and would have the right to present proposals on matters of general interest. The Constitution would also introduce measures for the protection of the German and Danish languages in Schleswig. The draft of the Constitution would be submitted to the examination of an Assembly consisting of persons who would, for the greater part, be elected by the Provincial Assemblies, the remainder being nominated by the King.

The divergences between the claims of the Liberal party and the tenor of the new Constitution were so wide that they aroused the greatest misgivings. The effect of it would be to place the Duchies on an equality with the kingdom without regard to the fact that there were some 1,300,000 souls in Denmark as compared with 800,000 in the Duchies. The Government, by placing the Duchies in one separate camp, were misguidedly tying another knot linking Schleswig with Holstein. The disapproval was so widespread that many prominent men, who had hitherto kept aloof from politics, felt compelled to declare openly their aversion to a Constitution which attacked the vital interests of Denmark.

A confused horizon was suddenly brightened by the February revolution in France (1848), the spirit of which spread over Europe. It gave fresh hope to the Liberal movement in Copenhagen. At a meeting held in the Casino on the 20th March, the Liberal leaders, at the same moment as they denounced the declaration on the Constitution, begged that there should be a common popular Assembly for Denmark and Schleswig, whilst Holstein should have its own *Landdag* to deal with provincial affairs. At a political meeting held simultaneously at Rendsborg, in South Schleswig, in which the principal speaker, Olshausen, characterised the Danes as a "lazy, indolent and disunited people," it was decided, after a heated debate, to send a deputation to Copenhagen to present the demand for a free Constitution common to the Duchies and for the admission of Schleswig to the German Federation.

PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT IN KIEL

Of the few Danish deputies present at the meeting, one of them, Hans Krüger, had the courage to observe that there was also a North-Schleswig who had the right to an opinion.

At this juncture the King took a vital decision. Convinced that there must be a change of Government before he could present himself as the people's leader, he accepted the resignation of the four Conservative members and formed a new Government which was known as the "March Ministry." To facilitate its entry, A. W. Moltke, a Minister in the late Government, entered it as Prime Minister and Minister of Finance. Though it was a mixed Cabinet, the majority of its members were National Liberals, among them D. G. Monrad and Orla Lehmann. The King, on taking the oath from his new Ministers, declared that he henceforth regarded himself as a Constitutional King.

On the 24th March the Danish Government handed their reply to the delegation representing Schleswig-Holstein. They stated in categorical form that Denmark was ready to give Holstein a free Constitution but that she possessed neither the right, the power nor the will to incorporate Schleswig in the German Federation; on the contrary, it was the intention of the Danish Government to strengthen their connection with Schleswig. Viewed from an historic background, each party might be said to have the right on its side. But whether or not the deputation from Schleswig-Holstein was seriously intent on reaching a settlement—the Augustenborgs left them with little choice—an insurrection broke out before the deputation returned to Kiel with the text of the Danish reply. On the 23rd March a provisional Government was formed at Kiel under the leadership of Reventlow Preetz, and Prince Frederick of Nör. On the same evening it was decided to make a surprise attack on the fortress of Rendsborg. The old General Lützow offered no resistance and surrendered his command. The Duke of Augustenborg, who had been driven from his castle in North Schleswig leaving his incriminatory papers behind, hastened to Berlin to beg the assistance of King Frederick William IV of Prussia. On 4th April 1848 Prussian troops crossed the Holstein frontier.

The Danish army was not prepared for war. In 1842

DANES OCCUPY SCHLESWIG

Denmark had gone over from a standing army to a militia. The first task of the new Government was to provide arms and equipment for recruits. Denmark was fortunate in the choice of Colonel Tscherning as Minister of War, and he was given full freedom of action. He promptly appointed Major-General Hedemann to command the army in North Jutland. In September conscription was ordered and by November a new fighting force was able to take the field. The nation was filled with the greatest enthusiasm; young men volunteered their services, many of them from Norway and Sweden. At the end of March Hedemann's army entered Schleswig and occupied Haderslev and Sønderborg. The army of the provisional government of Schleswig-Holstein under General Krohn was spread over the greater part of Schleswig and from Flensburg it launched a detachment against Aabenraa. The first encounter took place at Bov, near Flensburg, on the 9th April. After a fierce struggle, the insurgents were put to flight and the whole of Schleswig as far as the Eider was occupied by the Danish forces. But for the support given to the enemy by Prussia and the Diet, the war might have ended at this stage.

It was not long before a large army of Prussians, Federals and Schleswig-Holsteiners arrived at the Danevirke. Denmark having rejected the summons to evacuate Schleswig, fighting began in earnest and, on Easter Day, 1849, the Danish army was unexpectedly attacked by a vastly superior force under the command of General Friedrich Wrangel and, after an eight-hours' contest, retreated to the island of Als after suffering serious losses. Wrangel's advance through Jutland was suddenly checked by the intervention of Russia who, through her Emperor, peremptorily ordered that hostilities should not be carried into North Jutland. As Prussia feared Russia more than any other power, orders were sent for an immediate evacuation. Meanwhile the Danish army had been reorganised. Fighting began in Sundeved where Tscherning had assembled an army of 20,000 men. After a hard struggle the allied troops were driven back from their positions at Nybøl and Stendrup on the 28th May. In order to avenge this defeat, Wrangel and Halkett chose 5th June, the King

ARMISTICE CONCLUDED AT MALMÖ

of Hanover's birthday, for an attempt to split up the Danish forces at Dybbøl. Though this object was achieved, a reinforced Danish army subsequently repulsed the enemy along the whole line, and the position remained as before.

It was natural that the Danish Government should address themselves to England and France as the Powers who had guaranteed to Denmark the possession of Schleswig. England, as the majority of European Powers, was now in favour of the division of Schleswig to which neither Denmark nor Schleswig-Holstein would give her consent. The only country to intervene on the side of Denmark was Sweden. King Oscar notified the Court of Berlin that he would not suffer the invasion of the Danish Isles or of Jutland and, to give force to his words, placed a Swedish army in Scania, part of which was later transferred to Fünen, nearer the seat of war. Prussia, who was suffering from the blockade of her Northern and Baltic ports by Danish ships, herself desired an armistice. A seven-months' armistice was concluded at Malmö on the 26th August 1848. Under its terms the armies of Prussia and Denmark were to evacuate the Duchies; Denmark was to maintain an army of 2,000 men in the island of Als to guard the depôts, and Prussia was to maintain a similar number in Altona. Two detachments of soldiers born in Schleswig and Holstein were to be garrisoned in the Duchy to which they belonged by birth. All the laws for Schleswig-Holstein promulgated after 17th March were to be abrogated, but the new Government had the right to renew them if they were found indispensable. A common Government of five members was to be established for the two Duchies, of which the King of Denmark might elect two for Schleswig and the King of Prussia two for Holstein: the fifth would be chosen by common accord to preside over the Executive Power which was to be exercised in the name of the King of Denmark. The agreement was of no consequence because the common Government was never installed and a new one which took its place behaved as if a truce had never been signed. From the moment of its installation, it was imbued with the spirit of Schleswig-Holsteinism.

On the 15th December the common Government of the

RE-OPENING OF CAMPAIGN

Duchies was declared illegal by the King for having engaged in seditious acts, and two months later the armistice, which had been violated in nearly every one of its articles, was denounced. A new Danish Government was now in power. There is reason to believe that the "March" Government owed its departure to a disagreement with the King over the conditions to be accepted in making peace with Prussia. Frederick VII, with the greater part of his nation behind him, had refused to entertain any proposals that aimed at the division of Schleswig. In the new Government A. W. Moltke continued as Prime Minister and General Hansen replaced Tscherning as Minister of War. The "November" Government of 1848 had the reputation of being liberal-minded, but was certainly less so than its predecessor.

England for one disapproved the action of Denmark in denouncing the armistice and at her request it was prolonged for eight days. Danish historians maintain that this postponement upset the plans of the army for attacking the Schleswig-Holstein army before it had time to operate in conjunction with the German troops. Since the last campaign Denmark had increased her forces to 41,000 men, most of them well trained and well equipped. An army of 46,000 enlisted by the Government in Frankfort was placed under the command of General Prittwitz, while the army of Schleswig-Holstein of 20,000 men was commanded by General Bonin, a Prussian. At the very moment that war reopened, Denmark suffered an ignominious defeat at sea. While making a demonstration against the naval batteries at Eckernförde, the Danish man-of-war, *Christian VIII*, blew up and the gunboat, *Gefion*, was captured. At the end of April Bonin was investing Fredericia and the army of Prittwitz advancing to the middle of Jutland. The Norwegian, General Rye, who had invaded Schleswig with a small force, was ordered to retreat. At this moment General Bülow replaced General Krogh as commander-in-chief of the Danish forces. All the continental part of Schleswig was now in possession of the enemy, and on the 23rd April the Schleswig-Holsteiners entered Jutland after gaining a victory at Kolding. Meanwhile Rye had collected a large force to relieve Fredericia.

TREATY OF BERLIN

This was the position in the late spring of 1849. But victory was soon to come to the Danes. In front of Fredericia stood Bonin with his 20,000 men from Schleswig-Holstein, while the Federal forces were spread over a long line extending from Holstein to Aarhus. The scattered Danish divisions could be reunited at any moment and deliver a mortal blow at any part of the German army. This is exactly what happened. Following a Council of War at Vejlbj, Bülow decided to bring in his forces from Als, which were commanded by de Meza, and Rye's army from Jutland. On the early morning of the 6th July the four brigades of de Meza, Schleppegrell, Moltke and Rye, stormed the enemy's fortifications at Fredericia and, as the sun rose over the battlefield, the enemy was everywhere in flight. The whole of the fourth Holstein battalion were taken prisoners, but the victory of the Danes was dearly bought. They lost 1,900 dead and wounded. Amongst the fallen was General Rye whose bravery and noble character had won him the affection of every soldier.

Four days after the battle of Fredericia, a six-months' armistice was concluded at Berlin. Both sides agreed that Schleswig should be an independent unit within the Danish Kingdom and be administered for the time being by a commission consisting of a Dane, a Prussian and a British Commissioner. The allied troops were to evacuate Jutland and Schleswig with the exception of a remaining force of 6,000 Prussians in the southern part of Schleswig; North Schleswig was to be occupied by a mixed force of Swedes and Norwegians.

A year was wasted in an attempt to put into practical effect the clauses of the armistice. At this period Prussia was harassed by complications within and beyond her frontiers and earnestly desired peace with Denmark. A Treaty of Peace was signed at Berlin, on the 2nd July 1850, by the Danish plenipotentiaries Reedtz, Pechlin and Scheel and by the Prussian plenipotentiary von Usedom. Thereby all former treaties and conventions concluded between the two parties were renewed and the parties preserved all the rights they had enjoyed before the war. Under a convention signed the same day, the King of Prussia pledged himself, after the exchange of ratifications, to withdraw all his troops in Schleswig

WAR WITH THE DUCHIES ALONE

and Lauenburg. The only advantage that this convention brought to Denmark was the promise that she would not be disturbed by Prussia in suppressing the insurrection in Schleswig.

The Duchies now decided to continue the struggle alone and unaided. On the renewal of hostilities the forces of Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein were about equally matched in numbers. General Krogh, himself a Schleswiger, resumed command, and Moltke and Schleppegrell each commanded a division. The enemy's army, of which a third were German volunteers, had made all their preparations for a decisive battle. It was commanded by the Prussian, General Willisen, Bonin having fallen into disgrace after the battle of Fredericia. On the 13th July 1850 it crossed the Eider and entered the town of Schleswig. The Danish army, which had been assembled from Fünen, Als and Jutland, was marching south and a battle was imminent on the 24th July when the Danish outposts reached Helligbaek. By the end of the day the Danes were in control of the Helligbaek position and Schepelern's brigade had arrived at Solbro. In order to rest his troops, General Krogh waited until the following day before fighting the greatest battle in Danish history. The Danes began by dislodging the enemy from Isted where Willisen had taken up position. The field of battle extended from Solbro in the west to Vedelspang in the east. The defensive forces were singularly favoured by the natural protection of heather, forests and lakes. Between the two principal lakes of Isted and Langsö the enemy had posted a strong detachment to prevent the Danes passing through. The battle lasted from morning to night and ended in the enemy's defeat and flight. The Danish army then established itself on the Danevirke. Willisen made many attempts to atone for his defeat: he failed both in his plan of a flank attack by Mysunde and in his attempt to cross the Eider by Frederikstad.

The 'Three Years' War was now at an end. The attempt to separate Schleswig from Holstein had failed, but only through foreign help. On the Danish army occupying Schleswig, Tillisch was appointed Government Commissioner with full powers to administer the Duchy. The least

ADMINISTRATION OF SCHLESWIG

enviable of his duties was to enforce the Danish language in a province of mixed languages. In the Danish part of Schleswig extending to Flensburg, the Danish language was reinstated in the schools, churches, tribunals and the administration. In the southern parts of the Duchy, where *platt-deutsch* was spoken, high German (*hoch-deutsch*) remained as hitherto the official language. In the intermediary and mixed districts, the two idioms were placed on an equality in the churches, but in the schools the Danish language preponderated. An exclusively Danish College for secondary education was established at Haderslev, a German College at Schleswig and a mixed College at Flensburg where the two languages were to be equally used. Though Tillisch may be said to have exercised impartiality in his duties, he cannot be freed from the charge of having imposed the use of the Danish language in certain districts where it was no longer in use. Justly or unjustly these language ordinances contributed very greatly to the embitterment of Germany against Denmark and influenced Prussia's later proceedings in the Duchies.

CHAPTER XX

THE meeting of the first Constituent Assembly in Denmark in October 1848 was to fulfil the promise made by the King earlier in the year to the Municipality of Copenhagen that "if they placed the same confidence in him as he did in his people, he would be a safe guide toward honour and liberty." The Assembly had been elected under an Electoral Law passed by the Provincial Assemblies. Under this Law 114 were elected by universal suffrage and 38 by the King. The result was an Assembly divided into three groups which were almost equal in strength. The Central party was essentially the "March" party and embraced foremost politicians such as Andrae, Clausen, Hall, Madvig, Ploug and Schouw. The Left with Balthazar Christensen and J. A. Hansen represented the peasant class. The Right consisted of aristocratic landowners and officials of the old school, such as A. S. Ørsted and Spønneck.

After long deliberations on the form of the new Constitution, it was adopted in its final form on the 5th June 1849. Neither the King nor any of his Ministers appended their signatures to it without a certain reluctance and it is said that Louise Rasmussen (Countess Danner) had a hand in obtaining the King's final consent. The Constitution provided for two Assemblies, the Folketing and the Landsting. The Rigsdag, which comprised the two Assemblies and was to meet annually, exercised jointly with the King legislative power and the right of imposing taxes. The Ministers were held responsible for all acts of government. The right of election and of being elected to the Folketing belonged to everyone after reaching a certain age. The right of being elected to the Landsting was confined to persons who could show a minimum income of 1,200 rigsdaler. The members of the Folketing were elected for three years, the members of the Landsting for

AUSTRIA INTERVENES IN HOLSTEIN

eight years. Amongst other provisions were the equal rights of citizens in relation to public rights, the complete freedom of conscience, the liberty of the Press and of public meetings, and the permanent abolition of the censorship. All legal privileges pertaining to rank and title were abolished. Under this same Constitution all men capable of bearing arms were compelled to defend the country. All restrictions on the freedom of labour that were not in the public interest were removed. The King exercised supreme authority over the army and navy: he could declare war, conclude peace and make treaties.

Criticisms of the June Constitution alternated between denouncements of it on account of its wide popular basis, a contention that might seem justified by the fact that only 33 per cent of the electorate voted for the Constituent Assembly, and approval of it as a measure consistent with the contemporary world movement towards liberty and equality.

There were many National Liberals, a party which drew its strength from the towns and the intelligentsia, who looked askance at a measure which, in embracing the whole nation, scarcely responded to the nation's actual state of development. The movement which had brought about the Constitution was essentially more political than social. Monrad, the framer of the Constitution, set doctrines and ideas above all other considerations. Justification of the June Constitution is rather to be found in the influence it exerted in future years on the political development of Denmark.

Although the rebellion of Schleswig-Holstein had received its *coup de grâce*, Denmark had not thereby won greater security in her relations with foreign powers. The position of Schleswig—she was not a party to the June Constitution—was practically dependent on the humour of the German Powers and Russia. Denmark too was to a certain degree bound by the peace terms of 2nd July 1850, which charged the German Diet with the responsibility of keeping order in Holstein. Taking advantage of the Diet's failure to comply with its obligations and strengthened by her moral victory over Prussia at Olmütz (1850), Austria decided to take the matter in her own hands, in consequence of which the Duchy was occupied

A COMPLEX STATE

in January 1851 by an Austrian army and a Prussian reserve commanded by Field-Marshal Legeditsch. The revolutionary Assembly was dissolved and the Schleswig-Holstein troops south of the Eider were disbanded. The invaders declined to leave until a new status for Holstein had been negotiated with Denmark. These negotiations had scarcely opened before it became evident that feeling in Denmark was ceasing to regard the Eider as Denmark's political frontier and was veering instead towards the idea of a complex State or the unity of all parts of the monarchy under a common Constitution. The plan of the November Government (1850), which was the first move towards a complex State, was to separate Schleswig from Holstein without incorporating her in Denmark. Holstein was to be separated from Schleswig and be placed on the same footing as the rest of the Monarchy in regard to kingship, diplomacy and the armed forces. Schleswig would have her own Assembly, but a Constitution that bound her to the kingdom in certain matters of common interest. On being submitted to a representative meeting in Flensburg, the plan was flatly rejected by the notables of Holstein. Meanwhile the German Powers were making no secret of their aim to destroy the June Constitution. The constant changes of Government in Denmark, while the negotiations were in progress, destroyed all chances of a settlement until C. A. Bluhme was made Foreign Minister in the "October" Government of 1851. Bluhme was one of the outstanding politicians of the time. Logical and cool-headed, he was above all party dogmas and fixed political ideas. As a former Secretary of the Cabinet he was familiar with the mind of the Court. At this time its most influential figure was Countess Danner, who had been married morganatically to the King in 1850. Bluhme built his hopes on the more realistic programme of the Rigsdag party: the "Friends of the Peasants" formed a natural background for the policy of a complex State. The National Liberals stood steadfast by the Eider programme.

While Bluhme was leading to a successful end the negotiations with Austria and Prussia, the King himself in 1851 addressed these powers in the sense of establishing a constitu-

MANIFESTO OF JANUARY 1852

tional link between all parts of the monarchy. Schleswig should preserve her provincial independence and not be incorporated in the Kingdom ; at the same time any form of union between Schleswig and Holstein was to be deprecated " unless the outcome of the relations of the two Duchies and the Kingdom." The express reservations were made that the German Diet should renounce all pretensions to intervene in the affairs of Schleswig and that, in the exercise of his sovereignty in Holstein and Lauenburg, the monarch should not be exposed to greater restrictions than those imposed by the federal legislation in force. These views were approved by the Austrian and Prussian Governments, who thought it only natural that the Federal Diet should not extend its authority to Schleswig, as that province was independent of the Confederation. The Austrian Government expressed the wish that the countries united in a complex State should be placed on the same footing.

On the 28th January 1852 the King issued a Manifesto declaring his intentions with regard to the new Constitution which should be consistent with the maintenance of unity between the different parts of the monarchy. Affairs of common interest were to be administered commonly under one Constitution ; such were Foreign Affairs, Finance and Defence. The attributions of the remaining Ministers of Justice, Education and the Interior were to remain as before. Schleswig and Holstein-Lauenburg should each have its own Ministry which should be responsible to the King for its acts. The intention was also declared of restoring the constitutional faculties of the Provincial Assemblies of Schleswig and Holstein. The King further undertook to give equal protection to the German and Danish languages in the Duchies. The declarations signified two things ; the adoption of the complex State and the subservience of the June Constitution to the future common Constitution.

In the following months the Austrian and German troops evacuated Holstein, and the German Diet dignified its approval of the attitude of both Austria and Prussia, declaring that the provisions of the King's Manifesto on the 28th January, in so far as they related to Holstein and Lauenburg, were in accord-

ROYAL SUCCESSION IN THE DUCHIES

ance with Federal Legislation. On the eve of the King's Manifesto, a new government was formed with Bluhme as Prime Minister with the twofold purpose of putting into execution the terms of the Manifesto and of settling finally the moot question of the royal succession. Although without a majority in the Chamber, Bluhme had public opinion on his side. He could count on the support of the "Friends of the Peasants" who were at one with him in opposing the Eider policy, so long as he preserved the June Constitution for the kingdom.

The question of royal succession had played an important rôle in the Schleswig-Holstein revolt and was closely connected with the Government's plans for an unified State. Moreover, the branch of the Oldenburg dynasty which occupied the throne of Russia might raise pretensions to certain parts of Holstein. Negotiations on the subject with foreign powers had already begun. On the 2nd August 1850 England, France, Russia and Sweden-Norway had made in London a declaration, to which Austria later acceded, in favour of the maintenance of the Danish monarchy in its integrity and approved the plans of the King of Denmark to facilitate this by a new settlement of the order of succession which could be collectively recognised by the European Powers. The matter seemed nearer a solution when the Emperor Nicholas of Russia, on the 5th June 1851, renounced his pretensions in favour of the designated heir, Prince Christian of Glücksburg and his male descendants. By a family arrangement the nearest heir under the Royal Law of Succession, Prince Frederick of Hesse, renounced his right in favour of his sister, Princess Louise, who was married to Prince Christian of Glücksburg. Thus these two persons joined their respective rights. It was accordingly decided that, in the event of the extinction of the reigning agnatic line, Prince Christian would succeed to the throne and after him the agnatic line issue of his marriage with Princess Louise. This order of succession was sanctioned by the Protocol of London signed by the Great Powers and the Scandinavian countries on the 8th May 1852. It was also declared that, if later the new agnatic line became extinct, the same powers, in recognising as hitherto the principle of the

maintenance of the Danish monarchy in its entirety, would take into consideration any overtures made on the subject by the King of Denmark. The Protocol was not submitted to the German Federal Diet.

Under the Constitution, the Rigsdag had to give its consent to any alterations in the royal succession. In a Royal Message of October 1852 it was requested to give its sanction to the abrogation of the Royal Law of Succession and to the succession of Prince Christian and his descendants. In excluding, as it did, the cognatic line the petition created a fury amongst the opposition who insisted that, in the event of the extinction of the new agnatic line, the cognatic succession of the Royal Law, as a link between Denmark and Schleswig, should be restored. The Government would accept no compromise and, on the Folketing refusing to give way, the Rigsdag was dissolved. A Parliament, which met in June 1853, at the moment when Copenhagen was being ravaged by an epidemic of cholera, proved to be in a more amenable mood and the new law of succession was adopted by a decisive majority. The credit was due to the elderly A. S. Ørsted, who succeeded Bluhme as Prime Minister.

To Ørsted who had been an opponent of the June Constitution, there fell the difficult task of adapting it to the needs of a joint Constitution. The Rigsdag would only agree to changes in the June Constitution if made acquainted with the exact terms, and the Assemblies, on whom devolved some of the attributions of the Rigsdag, were given deliberative powers. The draft of a modified Constitution as finally presented by Ørsted went beyond the limits of necessity and the anger of the Rigsdag grew great when he declared that the granting of a Constitution was the special privilege of the King in the exercise of his full powers.

The attempts to produce a modified Constitution failed miserably. On the proposal of Monrad the Folketing addressed a petition to the King appealing to him not to break with the June Constitution and adding that the Ministry no longer enjoyed its confidence. The result of this petition was that Monrad was deprived of his Bishopric of Lolland-Falster and the influential members of Parliament who had taken part

CONSTITUTIONAL LAW FOR THE DUCHIES

in the address were deprived of their seats. The agitation of the populace rose to fever heat when, on the 26th July 1854, an autocratic ordinance on a Joint Constitution made its appearance. It introduced a Royal Council (Rigsraad) composed of fifty members, twenty chosen by the King and the remainder elected by the various legislative assemblies. Members of the Privy Council could not be members. The powers of the Royal Council were strictly limited; it was given a decisive voice in matters of taxation and State loans; in all else it played only an advisory part. An ordinance that conflicted with many of the articles of the June Constitution was bound to arouse protests from all parts of the country. The only favourable sign was the royal appointment to the Council of Tscherning, the leader of the peasants, which foreshadowed some form of a compromise.

Meanwhile the Government, in accordance with the Manifesto of 28th January 1852, had presented to the Provincial Assemblies of Schleswig and Holstein the draft of a new Constitution and of a new Electoral Law. The first gave them a decisive instead of a consultative voice in matters concerning them specially. Both Schleswig and Holstein complained that the law gave to them neither equality nor "independence." The Danish Government overrode this objection and the law became effective for both provinces. The Rigsdag, on reassembling in the autumn, once more addressed itself to the King, this time declaring its refusal to submit to conditions which deprived an Assembly, to which were entrusted the common affairs of the monarchy, of a decisive voice in those branches of legislation and government submitted to its control. In consequence Parliament was dissolved and new elections were ordered. At this moment the political situation was enlivened by the conquest of Sebastopol during the Crimean War and popular feeling in Denmark allied itself against Russia. The militarist members of the Cabinet, notwithstanding that Denmark had declared her neutrality, had been encouraged by the Council to make military preparations. It did not add to the Council's popularity when it was rumoured that these preparations were directed against England.

The new Danish Government that came into power at the

THE JOINT CONSTITUTION OF 1855

end of 1854 with a large majority for the National Liberals did not remain long in power. It was Scheele who, as Foreign Minister and Minister for the Duchies, took the lead in the new Government that was presided over by P. B. Bang of the Peasant Party. With the inclusion of Hall, a jurist, as Minister of Culture, and of Andrae, a mathematician, as Minister of Finance, the reversion to National Liberalism was complete. Changes in the June Constitution which were needed for the framing of the Joint Constitution were sanctioned by the King. The Joint Constitution, which was the work of Andrae, was based on a one-chamber system. The Royal Council was to consist of eighty members, of which twenty were as before elected by the King and thirty were chosen directly by the representative Assemblies of the State, and the remainder elected by the propertied class throughout the monarchy. It was to meet every second year, was to employ both the Danish and German languages and to have a decisive voice in matters of legislation and finance. This body might present to the King addresses and complaints, but the presentation of laws pertained to the Government; the Ministers were responsible for their acts and were liable to prosecution by a High Court. Both the changes in the June Constitution and the new Joint Constitution were passed by the Rigsdag and signed by the King on the 2nd October 1855.

So far as Denmark was concerned, the question of a complex state had been finally solved but, at the opening of the first meeting of the Royal Council, eight of its members from Holstein and three from Schleswig protested that the Joint Constitution had not been laid before the Provincial Assemblies in Holstein and Schleswig and declared that for this reason it would be considered invalid. They moved that the King should be invited to lay before the Ducal Assemblies the Electoral Law and those parts of the Joint Constitution which they had the right to examine in virtue of the Constitutions of the Ducal Assemblies and particularly the Manifesto of 28th January 1852, and that there should be submitted to the Council a new Joint Constitution and a new Electoral Law. Though the motion was rejected, the matter was not allowed to rest. Allowing that Denmark committed the

ULTIMATUM FROM AUSTRIA AND PRUSSIA

error of failing to consult the Assemblies in the Duchies before promulgating a Constitution, Holstein was less concerned with the Constitution than with the intentions of the Danish Government, counting, as she then could, on the support of the German Powers. For all practical purposes, the London Protocol was to the Great Powers a dead letter. Austria, formerly the bulwark of Denmark in the plan for a united monarchy, found herself threatened by a close understanding between Russia and France after the Peace of Paris (1856) and feared isolation unless she joined hands with Prussia. Russia and France declared that the Danish-Holstein conflict was a purely German affair. Of all the signatories of the London Protocol, Sweden and Norway alone stood by Denmark. It is easily understandable that at this moment the Danes could not accept the proposal of the eleven members of the Council. Acceptance would be to throw a cold douche on all their past efforts to build up a Constitution. Their more practical objection was that no constitutional question could ever be solved to the satisfaction of the Schleswig-Holstein opposition.

The Council had no sooner closed its meetings than there arrived notes from the Prussian and Austrian Governments complaining of Denmark's failure to comply with the agreements of 1851 and 1852; the new Constitution had been given without the advice of the Provincial Assemblies and it acted unfairly on the German minority. These notes were the historic starting-point in the events which culminated in the Treaty of Vienna of 1864. L. N. Scheele could not bring himself to believe that the German attitude had so completely altered. The light tone in which he answered these notes roused the indignation of the Prussian Minister and in March 1857 the two Powers sent Denmark an ultimatum. It declared that if Denmark did not within three weeks summon an extraordinary meeting of the Holstein Assembly or discuss the constitutional question, the matter would be laid before the Federal Diet. At this stage there were no feelings of embitterment and the doors were left open to the discussion of the ways and means of revising the Constitution.

The Danish Government, however, overestimated the

NEW PHASE IN DANO-GERMAN CONFLICT

strength of their position and saw no necessity to make far-reaching concessions. They were being gradually pushed forward by an important section of the National Liberals and of the Peasant Party, who were in favour of abandoning the complex State for the Eider policy. In this they were not without sympathy from outside. The spirit of Scandinavianism was reawakening and was assuming a political character. At a Students' meeting held at Upsala in June 1856, Ploug, as the Danish spokesman, won the support of King Oscar for an alliance between the Scandinavian countries. Sweden offered to place a force of 16,000 on the Eider in the event of a war. Frederick, inspired by Scheele, rejected the proposal because it did not include Holstein and was therefore a break with the whole-state principle. To make things worse, Scheele, without consulting his colleagues, addressed a circular note to Danish Ministers abroad rejecting the idea of a union between the northern countries. The note provided the long-awaited opportunity for removing Scheele from his position as Foreign Minister. It was left to a new Government under Hall to draft a reply to the ultimatum of the two Powers which had been delayed by the Cabinet crisis. He offered to submit to the Assembly of Holstein a draft Constitution for the special affairs of the Duchy and to leave it the right to express its opinion on the question of the relations of Holstein to the monarchy provided that it acted within its competence. The Assembly at Itzehoe rejected these advances and declined to discuss any Constitution of the kind before the Joint Constitution had been revised in such a way as to meet "the legitimate pretensions of the Duchy to independence and equality." The German Powers, taking their cue from the negative results of the Itzehoe meeting, decided that there was adequate ground for referring the matter to the decision of the Federal Diet. With this decision the Dano-German conflict entered on a dangerous phase. The small middle States of Germany desired a nationalist policy against Denmark, while the two German Powers were inclined to moderation. Prussia was only awaiting her time to use the situation for her own ends. Particularly significant were the words of Bismarck, the Prussian Minister to the Confedera-

ULTIMATUM FROM FEDERAL DIET

tion, which he wrote at this time to Manteuffel, the Minister for Foreign Affairs :

I do not see [he said] what we shall gain by allowing the Danish affair to be settled hastily to the satisfaction of all parties. As soon as the Holsteiners come to live happily under their Duke, they will take no further interest in Prussia. But this interest can, if not at this moment, be of use to us under certain conditions.

As might be expected, the decision of the Federal Diet was hostile to Denmark. It declared invalid and in conflict with the agreements of 1851 and 1852 both the special Constitution of Holstein and the Joint Constitution as applicable to Holstein and Lauenburg. The Danish Government were invited to establish a state of affairs in Holstein and Lauenburg which conformed to their promises. A fortnight later, 25th February 1858, the Diet adopted the proposal of Hanover for an "inhibitorium" which meant that the Danish Government were expected in future to abstain from legislative action in Holstein and Lauenburg. Denmark could only find comfort in the rejection by the Diet of a similar proposal put forward for Schleswig. Unable either to accept or reject off-hand the demands of the Diet, the Danish Government offered concessions which were no longer practical. They declared themselves willing to allow the Federal States to express their views also on the paragraphs of the Holstein Constitution which affected the Joint Constitution, but maintained that revision could only be undertaken by the Council. In reply the Diet insisted on a declaration by the Danish Government within six weeks of the manner in which they intended to regulate the status of Holstein and Lauenburg within the monarchy. Denmark was left with three alternatives ; to reject the demand outright and mobilise her army on the Elbe, or give up Holstein, occupy the Eider line and seek an alliance with Sweden, or delay decision by negotiation. After much wrangling in the Cabinet and the rejection in Frankfort of Denmark's offer of a temporary suspension of the Constitution as applied to Holstein, the Danish Government published the Royal Declaration of the 6th November 1858, whereby the Joint Constitution was abolished for Hol-

RETURN TO THE EIDER POLICY

stein and Lauenburg. This Declaration called a temporary halt in the dispute with the Federal Diet though the Complex State was gone for ever.

Whilst the Declaration was enthusiastically received in Denmark, it aroused the suspicions of the Holsteiners as savouring too closely of a move towards the Eider policy. When the Holstein Assembly met again early in 1859, it declined the offer of the Government to consider the revision of the special Constitution for Holstein and of the Joint Constitution. Nor could the extreme indulgence of the Danes save them from an attack by the Assembly on the most vulnerable of all points—Schleswig. What gave particular significance to the session was that it presented the first and only definite proposal made by Holstein for a Joint Constitution based on the Manifesto of January 1852: namely, that Laws common to all the States should be deliberated and accepted by the Assemblies for Holstein, Schleswig and Lauenburg severally: that a Privy State Council (*Gehejmestatsraad*) should be organised in order to ensure equal representation for all four parts of the monarchy without respect to population; and that the Royal Council should be abolished.

It can hardly be believed that Holstein was in sober earnest in presenting this proposal as a peace offering. Apart from its unfair distribution of authority, such a complicated piece of legislative machinery could never function. In Denmark the proposal acted as a lever for her Eider policy now that the last vestige of confidence in a complex State had vanished. The existing state of Europe was another reason for ending the negotiations. The European Powers were anxiously watching the events which stage by stage were leading to the foundation of Italian unity, and the designs of Napoleon III in that country. Prussia and the other German States feared for the Rhine, Austria for Venice and Hungary, and England feared that, after the annexation of Savoy and Nice, Belgium would be Napoleon's next victim. Prussia, with Austria, was anxious to avoid giving any pretext to Napoleon for meddling in the affairs of Germany.

This respite gave time to Hall, the Prime Minister, to evolve his policy for separating Holstein and Lauenburg from the

POSITION OF SCHLESWIG

rest of the kingdom. In the autumn of 1859 he made the conciliatory proposal to the Federal Diet that delegates equally representing Holstein and the Royal Council should meet to discuss changes in the Joint Constitution. In reply the Diet demanded that an equal number of delegates should be chosen for each province and that the Holstein Assembly should be given decisive, not merely advisory powers, in the matter of the Constitution. The Danish Government therefore abandoned the project and Frankfort at the time wanted neither a breach nor a settlement with Denmark. Hall continued to fight for the Eider policy, but failed to see that time was against him in his efforts to disentangle Schleswig from Holstein. The extinction of the male Oldenburg line might make the position worse than before and the anti-Danish agitation in Germany and in the Duchies would only sharpen with the years. It would not lessen so long as Denmark used her constitutional powers to hold down the German opposition in Schleswig by forbidding anti-Danish propaganda, all forms of public meetings and even the import of foreign books and newspapers. The shortsightedness of this policy was publicly exposed in a meeting of the Schleswig Assembly in 1860 which ended with an address to the King challenging the validity of the Constitution of Holstein and pleading for the renewal of the old connection between the Duchies as the only satisfactory arrangement. Immediately after this meeting the Prussian Chamber was the scene of a violent attack on the Danish administration of Schleswig.

It was thus that Schleswig was dragged into the arena of European politics with England as the intermediary between Denmark and Frankfort. England recommended Denmark to modify her language ordinances in Schleswig, to be generally more conciliatory towards the German population, and to change the Constitution. Finally, under pressure both from England and Russia, Denmark consented to make concessions so limited in scope that they pleased neither the Germans nor the Danes in Schleswig. The revolt of Holstein in 1861 against the payment of her share of the common budget was the first symptom that Germany desired to push matters to the extreme. At the same moment William of Prussia made

FOREIGN POWERS APPROACHED

the notable declaration that it was the national duty of Prussia and her associates to bring the question of the Duchies to a proper ending.

Public opinion in Denmark was becoming restless and wanted the Government to stand fast whatever the cost. The maintenance of an Eider State became the motto of a patriotic movement led by Orla Lehmann. As a popular expression of loyalty to this principle, an address was presented to the King with 71,000 signatures. In the middle of this popular ferment, the Government were actively engaged in rearming the country ; troops were despatched to the Duchies and a part of the fleet put in readiness. In one last effort Hall laid before the Assembly of Holstein new proposals for a Joint Constitution and a special constitution for the Duchy, but both were rejected. He still reckoned that, while the foreign Powers seemed averse to a war, he could proceed peacefully with his plan of separating Holstein from the kingdom. To strengthen his hand, he invited Lehmann to join the Cabinet. Henceforth the Government's fixed policy was concentrated on the Eider.

As the Federal Diet appeared to be in no haste to continue negotiations, Hall decided that he would best be served by strengthening the ties with northern countries and by leaning on the possible support of England. In a circular addressed in May 1861 to the Neutral Powers he declared the readiness of his Government to give Holstein an independent position which would enable the King to fulfil the wishes of the province without prejudice to the rights of the kingdom and Schleswig. Russia, supported by France, declared herself definitely opposed to the separation of Holstein, for fear that the harbour of Kiel would be made the basis for a future German fleet. England, whose immediate object was to avert any precipitate action on the part of the Federal Diet, proposed that direct negotiations should be opened between Denmark and the German Powers for the settlement of the constitutional affairs of the monarchy. Denmark in return was asked to relieve Holstein of her contribution to the common budget and to refrain from applying common laws to Holstein. This proposal was accepted by Prussia, Austria, Denmark and the

INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS

Federal Diet, the last deciding to suspend action until the results of the international negotiations were seen.

To arrive at a proper understanding of the influences that were framing the policy of Denmark in these critical days, it is necessary to study the political background. The National Liberal Party became an important factor in Danish politics ever since the fall of Ørsted's Ministry which stood for a territorial *status quo ante*. Then the young Liberals began to replace the older generation in the higher places of the State. The party had a commanding voice in the Royal Council as well as in the Landsting and it could hold its own against the opposition in the Folketing. The only menace to its power came from the remnants of the Conservative "whole state" party as represented by politicians such as Bluhme and Tillisch who enjoyed the favour of the Court. But with little public support and without a constructive policy it could do no more than criticise in debate. The National Liberals were no public agitators. For power and popularity they depended on the two most popular newspapers of the time, the *Fædrelandet* and the *Dagbladet*. They were frequently at loggerheads, yet marched in different ways towards the same goal.

In the "international negotiations" which opened in the autumn of 1861, the position of Schleswig occupied the principal place in the discussions. Danish arguments refuting the right of the German Powers to intervene in the affairs of Schleswig produced no effect on them and found little sympathy with the Neutral Powers. To the former the inclusion of Schleswig in the negotiations was the most practical way of keeping the conflict alive and of stalemating the efforts of Denmark to establish an Eider State under the guise of meeting the requirements of the Federal Diet in regard to Holstein. By the spring of 1862 European diplomats were gaining the conviction that the only solution of the dispute, seeing that no agreement could be reached that did not embrace Holstein, was to return to the old plan of the division of Schleswig. Count Bernstorff, the Prussian Foreign Minister, had in view the incorporation of the southern part of Schleswig in Holstein while the northern part remained a part of Denmark.

It was from this angle that Lord John Russell sought the

THE GOTHA DESPATCH

support of the Neutral Powers for the proposal that Denmark should comply with the demands of the Federal Diet regarding Holstein and Lauenburg and that all controversial matters on Schleswig should be settled by a Conference of the seven Powers who had signed the London Protocol. Not only the Danish Government but all political parties in Denmark were united in their opposition to Russell's proposal. The only policy that could hold the Danish Cabinet together and preserve for it a popular majority was the Eider policy: "the Eider as the national frontier, the June Constitution for the country's flag and the brotherly nations of the north as allies." Strong opposition in the Royal Council to these patriotic designs, far from dispiriting the public, only reacted in a fresh outburst of Scandinavian sentiment. The friendship between the two Kings, Frederick VII and Charles XV, who ascended the Swedish throne in 1859, and the popular sympathy for Denmark both in Sweden and Norway, offered a promising background in Hall's own estimation. He foolishly took for granted an alliance with those countries. Manderström, the Swedish Foreign Minister, was all for the separation of Holstein and occasionally intervened with the Powers in favour of Denmark, but of an alliance there could be no question.

The sum and substance of these "international" negotiations were that Prussia, in the name of the German Powers, demanded that Denmark should abolish the Joint Constitution for the whole monarchy and should replace it with another which was not based on popular representation; until the new Constitution came into force, all the Provincial Assemblies should be allowed to enjoy equal constitutional rights. The demand was also made that the language ordinances in Schleswig should be suppressed. Before the Danish Government had time for reply to these demands, they received from Russell, then at Gotha whither he had accompanied Queen Victoria, a sensational despatch,¹ the terms of which conflicted with the attitude hitherto adopted by England. It declared invalid for the kingdom and Schleswig the Constitution of

¹ This is the famous despatch written under the influence of Robert Morier.

THE MARCH MANIFESTO

1855 and proposed the introduction of a new Constitution which, after the conception of Holstein, gave equal rights to all the four provinces. Russell, with the threat of war drawing near, wanted to secure peace by bringing pressure to bear on the weaker party and so winning the good will of the German States. These proposals were promptly accepted by the German States, and Russia and France followed their example. Danish diplomats abroad advised their Government to seek a compromise with the Great Powers.

But the Danish nation was left little time to brood over Russell's despatch. The new year, 1863, found the European Powers taking separate sides over the revolution in Poland. France, England and Austria were in varying degrees on the side of Poland ; Prussia was the only State to stand by Russia. As Denmark viewed the situation, Prussia would be nearly isolated and Denmark would be left alone to settle her accounts with Holstein. At the same time the prolongation of the existing situation might bring ruin on the monarchy. That the nation needed and expected greater decision was shown in the large representative meeting held in the Casino on 28th March 1863, which passed a resolution that a Constitution under the control of the Federal Diet was irreconcilable with the independence of Denmark, that the constitutional union of Schleswig with the kingdom should be maintained and that, in view of the last acts of the Holstein Assembly, Denmark should break off her common relations with the Duchy. Two days later the Danish Government acted in the spirit of this resolution by taking measures for the severance of the constitutional link existing between Holstein and the rest of the monarchy. In a manifesto of that date, they declared that the encroachment of the Federal Diet on the sovereign rights of the King and the irreconcilable attitude of the Holstein Assembly towards the monarchy had compelled the King to establish the constitutional position of Holstein within the monarchy in such a manner that it complied as near as possible with the demands of the Federal Diet. The manifesto also declared that Holstein and Lauenburg should maintain an army division at their own expense. In all matters affecting Holstein directly, legislative power was to be exercised jointly

DECLARATION OF PALMERSTON REGARDING SCHLESWIG

by the King and the Assembly of the Duchy. A proposal on these lines would be laid before the next meeting of the Holstein Assembly. It was shortly afterwards announced that a Joint Constitution for Denmark and Schleswig would be submitted to the Royal Council.

In Denmark the March manifesto was received with mixed feelings. From the Conservative side the Government were attacked for having closed the door to the maintenance of a complex State and from the Liberal side for failing to take steps to constitute legally an Eider State. As might be expected, the German Powers protested against the manifesto as a breach of the agreements of 1851 and 1852 and referred the matter to the Federal Diet who, on the 9th July, demanded under threat of force the withdrawal within six weeks of the manifesto and the introduction of a new Joint Constitution in accordance with German wishes. Denmark replied on the 27th August that she would regard the employment of force as an act of war, that she would not withdraw the manifesto but was willing to negotiate with the Diet on the further position of Holstein inside the monarchy. The Danish reply came immediately after the speech of Lord Palmerston in the House in which he declared that the German Diet had no more right to rule in Schleswig than in France or England, and that England with the rest of Europe held fast to the belief in the integrity and independence of the Danish monarchy. He was convinced that, if Denmark was attacked, she would not stand alone. At the moment the relations between the two countries were unusually friendly. England was under a debt of gratitude to Denmark for her assistance in having secured young Prince William, the son of Prince Christian, for the Greek throne, and there was mutual rejoicing over the marriage at that time of Princess Alexandra of Denmark and the Prince of Wales.

Everything seemed to be favouring Denmark when the European scene suddenly shifted. Russia declined the intervention of the Western Powers in the Polish affair, and England and Austria declined to accede to Napoleon's proposal to send an ultimatum to Russia. This *dénouement* threw the indignant Napoleon into the arms of Germany, and he refused

FAILURE OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH SWEDEN

the request of England that France should oppose any action that threatened the integrity and independence of Denmark and which would be in conflict with the London Protocol.

The only hope of Denmark now lay in a Dano-Swedish alliance in spite of past disappointments. The arrival of Charles XV in Skodsborg in July was hailed as the prelude to a defensive alliance. Count Hamilton, the long-time Swedish Minister in Copenhagen and Manderström, the Swedish Foreign Minister, both warmed to the idea though they were not blind to its dangers. As Hamilton was acting as the faithful mouthpiece of Manderström in the negotiations, a draft-treaty, which pledged Charles to provide 20,000 men in the event of the occupation of Holstein by German troops, seemed as good as signed when it was taken to Sweden for final approval. But Manderström had acted without consulting the remaining members of the Cabinet. In a meeting at Ulriksdal Castle on the 8th September 1863 the plan was rejected by most of the Ministers for the given reason that Sweden-Norway possessed neither the financial nor military resources to enable them to assist Denmark single-handed against a German attack. There now remained to Denmark no other recourse than to invoke the moral support of the Neutral Powers.

Her actual situation left Denmark exposed equally to the two dangers of a retreat and of a forward policy. Retreat she could not in the face of public opinion which was more incensed than ever and demanded firm action. The last hope in the possibility of continuing to govern under the existing Constitution evaporated in the July meeting of the Assembly in Schleswig. Then twenty-four German deputies resigned as an act of childish protest against the results of the last elections to the Assembly which had reduced their majority. On the 28th September, three days before the expiry of the Federal Diet's ultimatum, Hall submitted to the Royal Council his proposal for a Constitution for Denmark and Schleswig. It raised no question of the incorporation of the province in the kingdom and was intended primarily to establish a constitutional link between the two parts. The Royal Council was converted into two chambers : the Folketing with 130 members

A CONSTITUTION FOR DENMARK AND SCHLESWIG

freely elected and the Landsting consisting of eighty-three members of which twenty-five would be chosen by the King and the remainder be elected by the propertied class as in the Constitution of 1855.

On the virtues of the new Constitution opinion was much divided. The National Liberals were impressed by the words in the Royal Message which declared the intention to give the Council such strength that it would "be able in the course of time to carry out full constitutional development." But these same words inspired no confidence in the Peasant Party which was united in condemning the methods of election to the Landsting, and this feeling was shared by a number of Schleswigers. What if these dissentients together with the "whole state" Conservatives as the bitterest enemies of the Eider policy overthrew the bill which required a two-thirds majority? The Government determined to take no risks and conducted a violent campaign in the country. To make success doubly sure, the Landsting was given a more democratic flavour by a reduction in the number of members chosen by the King. The bill then obtained an easy passage on 13th November. The National Liberals had accepted responsibility for an Eider State and the bulk of public opinion was on their side. On the day of its acceptance the news came that the King was lying dangerously ill in Glücksburg Castle. The end came two days later, on the 15th November 1863.

In those critical days Denmark could ill afford the loss of a king who in his person provided the one link that could hold the monarchy together. Neither in the Federal Diet nor in the Duchies were his legal rights to all parts of the monarchy ever placed in doubt. At this moment the Danish Government were carrying on their shoulders the whole weight of responsibility for an important constitutional measure which had caused bitter strife within the monarchy and which had not been recognised by any of the leading Powers. On the question of royal succession, neither the Federal Diet nor Separatist Party in Holstein had given its assent to the London Protocol which had recognised Prince Christian as the heir to the Danish throne. Though with little statesman-like gifts, Frederick VII possessed in an un-

ABOLITION OF THE SOUND DUES

common degree the aptitude for winning the affections and confidence of the common folk, which never deserted him. The weak sides to his character, which were known to almost everyone, were forgotten in the glamour of the great events of his reign; the March days, the Three Years' War and the granting of the Constitution. The nation loved him above all for his Danish sentiments. Throughout his reign he remained faithful to his people, true to his motto; "the people's love, my strength."

Although in the greater part of his reign political activity centred on the relations with the Duchies, it was marked by many progressive acts in the interior reform of the country. The most important of all was the Trades Law of 1857 which abolished the previous rights of the towns to a monopoly in handicraft and commerce and allowed free competition. The inevitable result was a large migration of labour from the towns to the country-side. It was the period of the National Liberals when the big landowners no longer played the leading part in politics. The peasants showed their first sense of independence in agitating for the conversion of tenancies into freeholds. By a number of beneficial reforms agriculture was made more intensive and more productive. Other favourable symptoms were the rise in the export of corn, then Denmark's staple product and the rise in the value of land properties. But this golden age was only transitory. Marketing conditions in the outer world were changing and in 1863 there was no demand abroad for Danish corn.

Trade and industry enjoyed on the whole a more prosperous time than agriculture. In the year 1862 there were no less than 2,762 Danish merchant ships in service. Trading with the Faroe Islands, which had hitherto been a state monopoly, was made free in 1855 and foreigners were allowed equal commercial rights in Iceland. On the other hand, trade with Greenland continued to be a state monopoly. Free Trade formed the basis of Denmark's financial policy. Following an International Conference held at Copenhagen in 1857 the Sound dues were abolished in return for a heavy indemnity. To this progressive period belong the first construction of a railway from Copenhagen to Korsör and the installation of

the first telegraphic service which connected Copenhagen with Hamburg. Amongst the many new laws associated with these years were the laws granting women equal rights with men in the matter of succession, and the laws for election to the Parochial and County Councils, the last of which remained in force until the coming century.

The establishment of a Constitutional Government in 1849 and the 'Three Years' War had aroused a common national spirit which had been hitherto unknown. It formed a natural background for the Danish folk high schools. The idea sprang from Grundtvig but was put into effect by Kristen Kold. Of these high schools the first was built at Rødding in Schleswig (1844) and was in the nature of a spiritual Danevirke. It was followed by many others. Their primary object was to give a liberal education to the children of farmers. Until the middle of the nineteenth century, the Danish peasantry was an ignorant under-class, dependent on land-owners and Government officials and did not even understand the meaning of the various agricultural reforms that were for their benefit. Although Kold was entirely unversed in technical agriculture, he influenced the practical and spiritual side of country life more than any of his contemporaries, save Grundtvig.

To ignore Grundtvig would be to ignore the greatest spiritual force in Denmark during this period and in the years to come. He belonged like Øhlenschläger to the young, romantic school. Ansgar was the Apostle of the North in the ninth century; Grundtvig was the Prophet of the North in the nineteenth century. Born in 1783 of a family which could claim descent from Absalon, his first spiritual awakening came to him when he had shaken off the rationalist and free-thinking tendencies of his early days as a student. Only in his twenty-seventh year was he led back to the Lutheran faith of his childhood. Henceforth it was a faith in Christianity, with history as the background, that shaped Grundtvig's life, though not without much searching of the heart. From a belief in the moral value of northern mythology, he translated, in later years, the works of Saxo and Snorre, and wrote the *History of the World* which was meant for the people and not for



N. F. S. GRUNDTVIG

THE DANISH FOLK HIGH SCHOOLS

the learned. Of an extremely sensitive nature, he watched with despair the deteriorating influence on his countrymen of the long years of war and economic ruin. As a youthful parson, he poured the deepest condemnation on those who, in his own words, "danced upon the brink of Denmark's open grave." The real Grundtvig was not revealed until the dark years that followed the Treaty of Kiel of 1814. From that time he gave his whole life to the enlightenment of the common people, but he was to pass through many trials before his dreams could be realised. His visits to England in the years 1829-31 and his admiration for her civil and religious freedom, which did not exist in Denmark, exerted no little influence on his later work. On his return to Denmark, he prepared the way for the Danish folk high schools. Though he rejoiced in the era of political freedom which opened in Denmark in the 'thirties, he did not believe in a parliamentary constitution unless it drew its strength from an enlightened public.

To understand the true meaning of the movement, one must picture Grundtvig talking brilliantly to enthusiastic audiences in crowded lecture rooms as a great poet, a great historian, and as the saviour of the common people. These public meetings, which opened and ended with the singing of songs about Danish folk-lore, succeeded, more than anything else could do, in awakening the spiritual life of the people. But the permanent foundation of Grundtvig's work lay in the folk high schools. In his last days he could look back with pride and satisfaction on the harvest of his lifetime. This great spiritual leader died in his eighty-ninth year. His spirit lives in the many psalms and hymns that are still heard in every Danish church.

CHAPTER XXI

IN accordance with the London Protocol, Frederick VII was succeeded by Prince Christian of Glückburg, who took the name of Christian IX. It was unfortunate that at this particular moment Denmark should have a king who was German-minded and spoke Danish like a German Schleswiger. Immediately after his accession he was faced with the refusal or the acceptance of the November Constitution which was to come into force on 1st January 1864. During the past reign he had kept in the background, partly because he was a staunch Conservative and partly because he and his wife, Louise of Hesse-Kassel, disapproved of the King's relationship to Countess Danner. Only consideration for the safety of the Realm induced Christian IX to give his signature to the November Constitution on the 18th November 1863.¹

It was soon to be shown how much Denmark had lost by a change of kings. The day after Frederick's death, Frederick of Nör assumed the title of Frederick VIII of Schleswig-Holstein under the alleged rights conceded to him by his father, Duke Christian, and in virtue of the extinction of the royal agnatic line of Frederick III through the death of the last king. Throughout the whole of Germany voices were raised in favour of the new Pretender. In Holstein and in German Schleswig Prince Frederick was an unknown figure and the Augustenborg family little popular, but the German-minded population welcomed his claim as the most practical method of being rid of the Danish régime. Prussia had no interest in respecting her signature to the London Protocol,

¹ The day before signature Sir Augustus Paget, the British Minister in Copenhagen, received a telegram from Lord J. Russell authorising him to suggest to the King suspension of his assent pending mediation. It appears, however, that the King had already decided to sign. See "C. N. David, Christian IX og Sir Augustus Paget" by Aage Friis.

DENMARK STANDS BY THE NOVEMBER CONSTITUTION

but was awaiting events. Bismarck from the first was opposed to the Augustenborg movement as thwarting his scheme of annexing Holstein and German Schleswig. A German middle State might support Austria against Prussia. In order not to offend the Great Powers, Bismarck recognised the validity of the London Protocol even after the death of Frederick VII. But he emphasised at the same time that, as signatory of the Protocol, Prussia, as the other signatory Powers, was responsible alone to Denmark. If Denmark put into force her November Constitution, she would be violating the agreements of 1851-2 and the provisions of the Protocol, which would no longer be binding on Prussia.

The attitude of France, Austria and Russia favoured Bismarck's plans. Napoleon needed the support of Prussia in his plans for the revision of the Vienna treaties. Russia was grateful for Prussia's assistance in suppressing the Polish Revolution, and Austria had more reason than Russia to fear Napoleon. But Austria was at the same time determined to prevent Prussia winning territorial advantages at her own expense. Only England, Sweden and Norway showed sympathy for Denmark. Palmerston was intent on preserving the London Protocol, which was his own work, and was willing to take energetic action. Russell, as Foreign Minister, preferred a peaceful solution of the Danish question, and in this was supported by Queen Victoria.

A misguided faith in the peaceful intentions of Prussia and Austria led both Russia and France to impress on Denmark the wisdom of casting aside the Constitution. Their action was accompanied by the veiled hint that no help could be expected of them in the event of war. Similar considerations were gaining favour in the British Government. Russell welcomed the proposal of the Russian Government that the Powers who had signed the London Protocol should send special envoys to Copenhagen to congratulate King Christian on his accession to the throne and at the same time invite Denmark to fulfil the agreements of 1851 and 1852. But neither the entreaties of the Neutral Powers nor the disappointment at the abandonment by Sweden of the plan for a defensive alliance could weaken Hall's determination to stand firm by

FEDERAL TROOPS OCCUPY HOLSTEIN

the November Constitution. Hall may have been right when he emphasised to the British and Russian envoys that the withdrawal of the Constitution would not necessarily secure peace for Denmark. Also there was no certainty that the Council would sanction the withdrawal. Whilst the more foreseeing members of the Cabinet realised that Denmark was steadily drifting into a state of complete isolation, Hall still clung to the belief that, if the lands north of the Eider were attacked, it would be in the interest of England and perhaps other States to intervene. This credulity was carefully fostered by Bismarck. The King was more sensitive of the coming dangers than his Prime Minister, and Hall's refusal to gratify the royal wishes that a Council should be summoned for the purpose of setting aside the November Constitution brought about his dismissal. A new Government led by Monrad came in on 31st December with no fixed plan and with far less chance than its predecessor of influencing public opinion. In the midst of these changes the news came of the occupation by Federal troops of Holstein and Lauenburg. Whilst the Danish troops were withdrawing, the Prince of Augustenborg arrived at Kiel and was there proclaimed Duke amid much jubilation.

Prussia and Austria decided that the time had come to nip in the bud the Augustenborg movement, the latest phase of which was the demand that Federal troops should push beyond the Eider and place the Duke in full possession of the Duchies. At the suggestion of Austria, the two Powers agreed to propose to the Diet that it should address a formal request to the Danish Government for the withdrawal of the November Constitution and, in the event of a refusal, occupy Schleswig. At this moment Great Britain reopened her peace overtures, which took the form of protesting against any action of the Federal Diet that aimed at violating the London Protocol. The Prussian Government was also informed that, if they proceeded with the plan of taking Schleswig in pawn without giving time to Denmark to abolish her Constitution by legal means, it would "place the relations of Great Britain and Prussia in great danger."

The protest made no impression either on Berlin or Frank-

ULTIMATUM FROM GERMANY AND AUSTRIA

fort, nor did Russell's proposal that a conference should take place between the signatories of the London Protocol and a representative of the Federal Diet to discuss the status of the Duchies. Foreseeing that the withdrawal of the November Constitution would give Bismarck the motive he needed for breaking with the London Protocol, the Danish Government, at the instance of Great Britain and Russia, declared that they would refrain from summoning a meeting of the Council for that purpose while the conference was in session. Germany and Austria were not so easily outwitted and refused to attend the conference before the Constitution was abolished. Great Britain then resorted to the alternative plan of demanding a respite for Denmark during which the Constitution could be withdrawn by legal means.

On 16th January 1864 Germany and Austria delivered an ultimatum to Denmark declaring that, if the Constitution was not withdrawn within three days, their Ministers would leave Copenhagen and their troops would then occupy Schleswig as a guarantee against its incorporation in the monarchy. Denmark humbly replied that she was ready to summon without delay the Royal Council to submit a proposal for the abolition of the November Constitution, together with a plan for a new constitution based on the January declaration of 1852, the substance of which would be submitted in advance to a European conference.

To Germany and Austria the January Declaration had long since lost its appeal, and Bismarck at this moment was offering, as the most acceptable solution, a Personal Union between the kingdom and the Duchies under one sovereign similar to the union between Sweden and Norway. It was self-evident that the project of a personal union could never be accepted by any Danish Government, and Bismarck must have known it. In the last days of January Great Britain repeated her efforts with Prussia and Austria to secure an adequate breathing-space for Denmark to withdraw the Constitution. The result was a flat refusal, and France also turned a deaf ear to the proposal of Great Britain for joint action against an attack on Denmark by the German Powers.

While the States of the Federation were foaming at the

ABANDONMENT OF THE DANEVIRKE

mouth, Prussian and Austrian troops were moving through Holstein to arrive on the Eider on the 31st January without any resistance from the Federal army. The army of 35,000 Prussians and 21,000 Austrians was commanded by the eighty-year-old Field-Marshal Wrangel: decisions were left to his Chief of Staff, von Falckenstein, Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia and General Gablenz. The seventy-two-year-old de Meza, the only remaining leader in the Three Years' War, was given command of the Danish army of 40,000 men. His instructions were to defend the Danevirke as long as possible and, when the line proved to be untenable, to retreat to Dybbøl. It was of importance to Denmark to be in possession of part of Schleswig when the time came for the Neutral Powers to intervene. But the Danish Government overrated the strength and morale of the Danish army which entered the war with antiquated weapons and without the breech-loaders used by the enemy. It also had little faith in its leaders.

The German commanders based their plans on a flank attack by the 25,000 Prussians under Prince Frederick Charles, and a front attack on the Danish centre by the remaining Prussians under Moltke and the 21,000 Austrians under Gablenz. In the first day's fighting the army of Frederick Charles was severely repulsed at Mysunde. The day after Gablenz assailed the central defences of the Danevirke, but met with considerable losses. The German command therefore decided to give up a frontal attack and to make a flanking movement between Kappel and Arnaes. The higher Danish command was almost unanimous in regarding the Danevirke as untenable, but both Monrad and the King considered that the line should be held. After the holding of a war council, de Meza and all the leading officers, with the exception of two, were in favour of a retirement. The retreat was effected at midnight, 5th February, unperceived by the enemy. When the enemy cavalry caught up with the Danish rearguard, it was held up by the brigade of Colonel Max Müller. This gallant resistance permitted the main body of the Danish army to retreat in good order. Withdrawing to Sønderborg, they enjoyed a respite of several weeks, which gave them the time to improve the defences of Dybbøl.

In Denmark the evacuation of the Danevirke caused the deepest indignation which bordered on panic. Lundbye, the Minister of War, was particularly infuriated that the decision had been taken without his being consulted. Monrad did his utmost to calm feelings and was on the point of succeeding when Lundbye threatened to resign unless de Meza was summoned immediately to Copenhagen to answer for his action. When Monrad surrendered, de Meza was dismissed and his place taken by General Gerlach. This change in the high command only served to strengthen the popular belief that the order to retreat had been an act of treachery. Posterity has expunged the blot cast on de Meza's name by his generation, for the evacuation of the Danevirke was an absolute necessity and the decision was only taken in the nick of time.

During the month of February there reigned comparative quiet along the Dybbøl front, except for the capture by Frederick Charles of the undefended peninsula of Broagerland and the forcing back of the Danish outposts. The obstacle to an immediate advance on North Jutland was Austria's fear that an extension of operations would cause England to intervene. Prussia was now convinced that the capture of Dybbøl would be a long affair and would entail unnecessary sacrifices ; she preferred to pin the Danes in Dybbøl while North Jutland and possibly Fünen were occupied. During a temporary lull the allies, under the pretence that they wished to secure their communications through Holstein, but with the real aim of keeping a hold on the Augustenborg movement, demanded from the Federal Diet the right to occupy Rendsborg, Neumünster, Kiel and Altona with Prussian troops. This was accomplished before the Federal troops could arrive on the scene. The occupation by Prussians and Austrians of Schleswig after the Danish evacuation of the Danevirke did not prevent the Prince of Augustenborg being acclaimed by the Schleswig-Holstein party in the towns and in the southern country districts. All vestiges of Danish administration were removed and the exclusive use of German as the official language was imposed both in Holstein and in Schleswig. As those who gave orders were nearly all Prussians, the control of the Duchies was gradually passing into Prussian hands.

THE FALL OF DYBBÖL

By the beginning of March the political clouds had cleared and Austria had satisfied herself that she had nothing to fear from the Western Powers even if she encroached on Danish soil. There was, however, the danger that the smaller German States might take an active part in the war unless strong measures were enforced against Denmark, as in exacting compensation for the losses inflicted on Federal trade by the Danish fleet. Prussia had now come round to the view that operations should be directed first and foremost to the destruction of the Danish position between Dybböl and Als. She was, however, prepared to accede to Russell's proposal for an armistice if Als was surrendered to her. Denmark foolishly refused to give up the blockade of the Prussian harbours and to negotiate on any other basis than the agreements of 1851 and 1852. The result was the resumption of hostilities.

In order to pacify the Minister of War, who was continuously clamouring for offensive movements directed either from Dybböl or Fredericia, Gerlach, on 17th March, made a feeble attempt to recover one of his lost fortifications. After this failure he refused to renew the offensive and concentrated all his efforts on strengthening the Dybböl defences. The weeks that followed brought severe trials to the Danes. Their redoubts were constantly exposed to heavy gunshot and the trenches were their only protection. It is not surprising that the Danish higher command was beginning to feel the wisdom of abandoning the position before it was too late. Notwithstanding that Lundbye had at first given his full consent to a retreat, he was overridden by Monrad, who considered it fatal to Denmark's position in relation to neutral powers at the coming London Conference if she surrendered her last line of defence. So convinced were the higher officers that they had the right on their side that General du Plat offered to Gerlach, then a sick man, to take over the command and, on his own responsibility, withdraw the Army to Als. Gerlach declined the offer.

The expected storm burst on 18th April. After a bombardment lasting six hours, 10,000 Prussians stormed the redoubts on the Danish left wing. Though the Danish reserves put

THE LONDON CONFERENCE

up a brave defence, they were again unable to compete with the Prussian breech-loaders. The remnants of the Danish army succeeded in crossing to Als after blowing up the bridges. The fall of Dybbøl, though the most costly of all battles fought in this war, left a less bitter impression on the Danish public than the evacuation of the Danevirke because it was a battle fought with honour.

When an armistice was declared on the 12th May the allies were in occupation of the Jutish peninsula as far as Limfjord. On the very day it was concluded, a Danish squadron of three ships under the command of Captain Suenson won a decisive victory near Heligoland over two Austrian frigates which were escorted by Prussian gunboats. However honourable this encounter, it came too late to exercise any influence over the course of events.

Neither Denmark nor the allies could predict the issue of the Conference which opened in London on May 12. So confused was the political atmosphere that neither side could steer an even course. England alone stood steadfast by the London Protocol. Bismarck saw in the Protocol a hindrance to his designs of annexing Schleswig and Holstein. His ally Austria was anti-Augustenburg and wished to preserve Danish Sovereignty over the Duchies. With so many obstacles in his path, Bismarck played the old rôle of artful conciliator in the hope that he would place his enemies in the wrong. However weak the position of Austria in Europe, he could not afford to part company with her while Napoleon was trying to drive Prussia into a policy which would bring her into conflict with Austria and split Germany into two hostile camps. Though the London Protocol was soon laid aside by the Conference, Bismarck had still to defeat the plans for a personal union between the Kingdom and the Duchies which were supported by England, Russia and Austria.

On the 17th May the allied delegates declared themselves in favour of a Personal Union provided that Schleswig-Holstein became an independent unit. It would be left to the Diet to decide who should rule the Duchies. This proposal was rejected by the Danish delegates, as public opinion would never agree to the surrender of North Schleswig to the Holsteiners.

FINAL CHAPTER IN WAR

But the Danes were ill-advised in condemning it outright when three of the Great Powers regarded Christian IX as sole Sovereign of the Duchies. In any case the proposal provided a foundation for negotiating a satisfactory settlement under another form.

Austria then put forward the candidature of the Augustenborgs as the only way of keeping Prussia out of the Duchies. Bismarck countered this plan in his characteristic manner by offering the Duchies to the Prince of Augustenborg on condition of a military convention which would in reality reduce him to a vassal of Prussia. The Prince rejected the offer and Bismarck had won another victory.

Bismarck was now in a position to submit his proposal for the complete separation of the Duchies from Denmark. Austria, in the fear that Bismarck would reap all the honours, was forced to comply. Russell, who had now come to regard the division of Schleswig as the only solution, proposed that South Schleswig up to Slien-Danevirke should be separated from Denmark. Both the Neutral and German Powers accepted the proposal, the latter making reservations regarding the actual boundary. When all hope had vanished of reconciling the boundary claims of the opposing parties, Russell, as a last resort, accepted Russia's proposal for arbitration ; a boundary line to be fixed by a Neutral Power within the line Flensburg-Tönder and the line over Eckenförde-Frederikstad originally proposed by Denmark. While Denmark declined the proposal, Germany agreed to the demarcation suggested by Russell, but without arbitration—the boundary should be fixed under the mediation of a Neutral Power. When this and the French proposal for a plebiscite had been rejected by the Danes, the two German Powers declared that they would be content with nothing less than the separation of the Duchies from Denmark. Monrad had always hoped for a ministerial crisis in England and the return of the Tories as the ardent friends of Denmark. The Conference broke up on the 25th June.

The allied armies had already made their plans for crossing Alsund and ejecting from Als the small Danish army of twelve battalions. It is possible that if the Danish man-of-war *Rolf Krake*, which arrived in the Sound at the moment when a

TREATY OF VIENNA

part of the Prussian army had effected a crossing, had remained stationary and had used her guns with effect, the remainder of the invading troops might have been cut off. As it was, her Captain believed that Als was already taken and decided to retire in order to cover the withdrawal of the bulk of the Danish forces to Fünen. After the loss of Als, all the Danish fighting forces were concentrated in Fünen, and Steinmann, who had been in command at Als, succeeded Gerlach as commander-in-chief. Well might the 40,000 men in Fünen prolong the fight indefinitely, because England and Austria were both opposed to an invasion of the islands. But the greater part of the population was not in the mood to continue the fight and Copenhagen specially lost heart. Further, the news arrived that the Whig Ministry in England had secured a vote of confidence in Parliament. Within a short time peace preliminaries were signed and an armistice agreed upon.

Under the Treaty King Christian was to cede to the King of Prussia and the Emperor of Austria all rights to the three Duchies and pledge himself to accept whatever measures the two sovereigns should decide to impose on them. The armistice was to last until the final signature of peace. When peace negotiations opened in Vienna it was abundantly clear that none of the Neutral Powers would help to save Danish Schleswig for Denmark. At the outset Bismarck made it known that any move on the Danish side to upset the peace preliminaries would lead to the immediate breaking off of negotiations. Peace was signed at Vienna on the 30th October and ratifications were exchanged on the 18th November 1864. Not only the German duchies of Holstein and Lauenburg, but the whole of South Jutland were ceded to Prussia and Austria.

Thus ended a war which in the space of a few months had dismembered one of the oldest monarchies in Europe. There were many who doubted whether the country would emerge from this disaster to her pride and integrity with the courage and will to face a new world. But time was to show that the Danish national spirit had not been broken by the afflictions of 1864.

By this treaty Denmark had obtained a definite and solemn promise, but as a non-signatory of the treaty she had no legal right to insist on its fulfilment. It may be questioned, however, whether her prospects were any brighter than before the war. Prussia's strength was vastly increased and she could now look France squarely in the face. Many incidents could be quoted to confirm the impression that popular opinion in Prussia made it necessary for Bismarck to stay his hand for a while. He gave a cold shoulder to the Danish Minister who came to congratulate him on the peace preliminaries. In none of the measures taken at the time for consolidating Prussian authority in the Duchies was there any sign of relaxation in favour of Denmark. The erection of boundary-posts, military conscription in Prussia, the fixing of elections to the Reichstag—none of these showed that Berlin was prepared for a plebiscite in the Duchies. Before a plebiscite could be held, said Bismarck in 1867, negotiations must first be conducted with Denmark in order to regulate economic relations and to protect the rights of the German-minded minority in South Schleswig.

Denmark rightly viewed with suspicion the insistence on guarantees which would leave the door open to Prussian interference and, at the most, Prussia would only be restoring half of the Danish portion of North Schleswig. Whether or not Bismarck was serious, he advised Denmark at the end of 1868 to try and prevail on the Czar of Russia to use his private influence with King William. Denmark promptly took the hint. Russia showed herself well disposed, but the situation radically altered when William got wind of the movement and expressed his displeasure in plain language. From the other Great Powers Denmark received little encouragement. French sympathy for the Danish cause, though real, carried little significance after Königsgrätz. On the French Ambassador representing to the Prussian Government that they had no right to demand guarantees from Denmark, he was peremptorily told that the Treaty of Peace between Austria and Prussia was a closed chapter. Yet the Czar of Russia had not abandoned all hope of a satisfactory solution and wrote in his own hand to King William begging him to give

DENMARK AND THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR

proof of his conciliatory intentions on the Schleswig-Holstein question. He received an evasive reply. The King declared himself unable to gratify the Imperial wishes from fear of offending public opinion, though he promised to return to the matter when a favourable opportunity occurred. With war again in the air, Denmark organised a small but efficient army.

In May 1870 the Government changed hands and Count Ludvig Holstein-Holsteinborg succeeded Count Friis as Prime Minister, while Baron Rosenørn-Lehn took charge of Foreign Affairs. Foreign diplomats were assured that there would be no change in Denmark's foreign policy. But on the outbreak of the Franco-German war the prevailing sentiment in Denmark favoured intervention on the side of France. The King, taking his cue from Danish officers who had been trained in the French army, was convinced of Germany's superiority. Raaslöff, the former Minister of War, who was then in Paris, took on himself the sole responsibility for preparing the ground for a Franco-Danish alliance. According to the French plans, a fleet of Danish and French vessels would be sent to the Baltic to threaten German communications in the north. Denmark in return would be rewarded with the whole of Schleswig. The plan was doomed to failure, as France needed all her strength to guard her frontier against Germany. Despite a declaration of Danish Neutrality on the 25th July, direct negotiations between France and Denmark began with the arrival of the Duc de Cadore in Copenhagen. When Denmark emphasised that an alliance was conditional on the early fortunes of war, negotiations ceased on the news of the first French defeat. But for that Denmark might have possibly entered the war. The earliest German victories had justified the warning given by the Prince of Wales and the heir to the Russian throne, when on a visit to Fredensborg at the outset of hostilities.

In the first year of the war the Schleswig-Holstein question lay in stillness. Now and then the hopelessness of Denmark's position aroused anxiety in foreign countries as to her whole future. This sentiment lay at the back of the proposal ventilated in European diplomatic circles for a guarantee of

ANNULMENT OF ARTICLE V OF TREATY OF PRAGUE

Denmark's neutrality. It fell flat for the very plausible reason that its acceptance at that time would be tantamount to the recognition of Denmark's existing position. An unhappy fact was that Prussia and Austria, with whom friendship was restored very soon after the war, were both itching to wipe out the obnoxious paragraph 5 of the Treaty of Prague. So long as it existed, there would be no end to the agitation it aroused in foreign countries, notably in Russia. Austria, as a co-signatory to the treaty, refused, however, to be a party to its cancellation, but added that she would never use it against Prussia. There the matter rested until the month of April 1878, when Austria and Prussia signed a treaty annulling the offensive article. To keep it clear from the negotiations then taking place at the Congress in Berlin, it was agreed to keep it secret for one year. But the death in the same year of the former King of Hanover, who had lost his lands in the war with Prussia, put a very different complexion on the treaty. Bismarck sought an agreement with his son, the Duke of Cumberland, fearing the consequences of the Duke's influence with the English Royal House to which he was related. The Duke refused to negotiate and he and Bismarck became the deadliest of enemies. To add fuel to the fire the Duke's engagement was announced, at the end of November 1878, to Princess Thyra, the youngest daughter of Christian IX. That it might not be thought that a treaty annulling article 5 of the Treaty of Prague had been directly inspired by the Cumberland marriage, it was postdated to the 11th October. Its publication shortly afterwards created a fury in the Danish Court and political circles. The Danish capital was shaken to its depths by the event, and Bismarck was to remain for ever conscious that he had laid a possible hotbed for anti-German intrigues which the Royal Houses of Russia and England would use against him.

The process of remoulding political forces in Denmark began properly with the fight for a new Constitution in 1866. The nation was confronted with two different Constitutions, the June Constitution of 1849 and the November Constitution of 1863 with its common control of the affairs of the kingdom and Schleswig. Which of the two should be accepted or

THE JULY CONSTITUTION

should there be a Constitution combining both? The November Constitution was coloured by the sceptical outlook of the National Liberals on the system of universal suffrage. The June Constitution had its warmest friends in the Peasant or Left Party, whose rising influence, unless undermined, might soon give it a majority in the Folketing. Its own interests dictated that the substance of the new Constitution should be decided in the Rigsdag and not in the Council of State, where the National Liberals held the majority. Only in making a minimum taxable income the basis on which persons were entitled to elect members to the Landsting could the Conservatives and the National Liberals realise their ambitions to give a Conservative stamp to the new Constitution. While a Bill to this effect was under consideration, party relationships were thrown into confusion by the efforts of the Peasant Party to make capital out of the National Liberals' responsibility for the misfortunes of the war. It was an agrarian movement directed against the towns and the higher official world. To add to the confusion, the big landowners led by Count Friis returned to politics and joined in the movement. The Bill was defeated and the Government resigned. With the aid of an united agricultural party, a new Government, with Count Friis at its head, was successful in obtaining a fair majority for a new Constitution which was passed in July 1866. Its principal points were the establishment of indirect elections to the Landsting and the restriction of electoral rights to half of the Assembly, to those who had a minimum taxable income of Kroner 4,000 in Copenhagen and Kroner 2,000 outside the capital. On the whole the new measure favoured the country more than the towns.

The political situation following the acceptance of the new Constitution was alive with complications. As the Government did not command a majority in the Landsting, Count Friis admitted into the Cabinet some National Liberals. Where he profited most was in the lack of unity in the Agrarian Party. At the end of two years, however, a succession of tactical errors loosened the strings of an unnatural combination which had been responsible for the recent Constitution. But it was not only the weak foundation on which the Govern-

CHRISTEN BERG

ment was directing their policy that threatened their position. It had been foreseen by all shrewd observers that the July Constitution would not bring political peace. The peasants, as distinct from the landowners, were rallying afresh under the Grundtvig flag and the Folketing was clamouring for the powers to which the Constitution entitled them. The Government received their final blow when Friis, tired of office and deserted by members of his own party, allowed himself to be defeated on a military vote by announcing that he would anyhow retire after the session.

The difficulty of forming a new Government was shown in the refusal of the Premiership by six different persons. The choice finally fell on Count Ludvig Holstein-Holsteinborg, while Estrup, leader of the National Landowners, held the strings. The new Ministry was a combination of National Liberals and landowners, the former including A. F. Krieger, the leader of the Party in the Landsting. The alliance between landowners and peasants had broken up when the landowners refused to subscribe to a law for the compulsory renewal of leases on the landowners' estates. All the peasant groups then joined together in forming the "United Left" Party, and the landowners in revenge joined up with the National Liberals. The outstanding figure in the new party was Christen Berg. Born on a peasants' farm in West Jutland, he became a teacher in the small island of Bogö, an incident which later earned him the nickname of the "King of Bogö." As a member of the Folketing, he quickly won popularity as an agitator who could drive the masses with him. The celebrated Norwegian poet Björnson, on receiving from him a visit in a Copenhagen hotel, said that "it looked as if the half of Denmark had come sailing through the door." Yet Berg possessed all the shrewdness of a peasant. Though a believer in the "moral right" that stood behind the June Constitution, he considered it injudicious to fight for it. In 1872 the United Left won a majority in the Folketing, but could only count a few supporters in the Landsting. The year before radicalism and international socialism made their first entry into Copenhagen. Berg's first adventure in politics was to present a programme of far-reaching reforms such as economy in the State's finances, a balance of revenue

ENTRANCE OF SOCIALISM

and expenditure and equal electoral rights to local boards and County Councils. These proposals were so far ahead of the times that they provoked a strong agitation throughout the country, and Berg was compelled for a time to withdraw into the political background.

While the fight between the Folketing and the Landsting was at its highest, socialism implanted itself in Denmark and made some converts. The first shoots had sprung up in Denmark in the year 1848, only to perish prematurely. It was left to Louis Pio, a young man of French origin, to rekindle the flames. He had served in the war of 1864 and later abandoned a position in the Post Office for his prophetic calling. His earliest efforts were aided by the Paris riots of 1871 and in Denmark by the depression amongst the industrial population which followed the war of 1870. Together with his cousin, H. Brix, Louis Pio began the publication of the paper, *Socialisten*, with the motto attached to it of "no rights without duties and no duties without rights." "Behind us," he proclaimed to the workmen of Copenhagen, "lies hunger and misery, ignorance and serfdom ; before us lies hope of a happy life illuminated by the rising sun of freedom. May our voices find an echo in your hearts, may we awaken your stifled enjoyment of life, and gather your forces to lead our community forward towards the great goal : all men's happiness and well-being." There could be nothing particularly disturbing to a modern audience in what he asked : fixed hours of work, free popular education, the separation of Church from State, the cessation of child labour and a single chamber elected under universal suffrage. Not content with establishing in Copenhagen a branch of the Marxist International which attracted many members, he and his fellow-workers made a tour of the provinces. In a few months he had enrolled 9,000 members, of which 5,000 belonged to Copenhagen. But their violent attacks on the Church and State struck so much horror amongst the respectable townsfolk that the Government and the police were waiting their time to arrest them as law-breakers. While attempting to hold a meeting in Copenhagen in May 1872, contrary to public orders, they were seized by the police, but not without heavy casualties on

GEORG BRANDES

both sides. Pio and two others were sentenced to many years' imprisonment. His sentence over, Pio attempted to revive his socialistic activities, but, as his finances were not equal to the task, he left for America.

Yet another movement was to spring up in Denmark which was to free young men from the dullness of their intellectual environments forced on them by the too conservative outlook of the academic profession. Young minds were easily led away by any novel and original ideas. The great innovator was Georg Brandes, who was the first man of Jewish birth to acquire a prominent position amongst the Danish people. Of the young men who attended the University there could be few who could make a greater impression than this original and scholarly character. He gathered around him a band of young students, most of whom were later to win notoriety in public life. As an Israelite he felt himself more and more a stranger to all that sprang from Christendom. He was always thirsting for new ideas which could replace accepted ones. It was for this reason that he later in life threw his soul into the study of ancient Greece and Rome in the hope that he might find in it proof of a higher culture than Christianity could provide. He would be a Hellenist and not a Christian at any price. Julius Cæsar he counted as a greater man than Jesus Christ. He took special delight in the heathenish traits of the Italian Renaissance, forgetful of the fact that it derived its strength from the religious revival of Francis of Assisi and from Savonarola. The enemies of the Church were his greatest heroes. If Denmark was not to enter into a state of self-dissolution, she must acquaint herself with human life and culture in foreign lands. The young generation must transform itself entirely before a new literature would be born.

He set as his first task to uproot the servile allegiance of Denmark to German theology and philosophy. The greatest human happiness, "free will," a new morality built on the fellowship of mankind, realism in place of idealism—these were the basic principles for which Brandes fought. An inquisitive and restless mind led him to spend his younger years in European capitals. He was visiting John Stuart Mill at the beginning of the war of 1870. His Jewish blood felt

most at home in the sunny southern lands of Italy which harmonised with his fiery, romantic nature. His heart warmed to the future when he received a letter from Henrik Ibsen with the words :

The world's events are occupying much of my thoughts. All that we now live for is only the dust blown from the revolutionary table in the last century. Events are leading to a new intensity. Freedom, equality and brotherhood are no longer the same thing as in the days of the guillotine. This is what politicians will not understand and therefore I hate them. What is wanted is the revolt of the human spirit and you should be one of those who stand in the front.

On his return to Copenhagen in 1871, Brandes began his famous lectures before crowded audiences. He threw down ruthlessly the gauntlet to the old threadworn conceptions of life in the name of "free thought and a free humanity." Faith in the teaching of the Church must give way to a recognition of free will as ordering human life. Outside academic circles these ideas caught little fire, and many were scandalised. The National Liberals and all the Press attacked Brandes for his drastic utterances on marriage and religion. Yet young radicalism was relentless in its attacks on the moral and religious life of the country. While the fight was raging most furiously, the professorship of æsthetics in the University fell vacant, but was not offered to Brandes as had been the wish of its late occupant, Professor Hauch. Considered a public danger, Brandes withdrew to Berlin, where he married a German lady. On his return to Copenhagen in 1883 he was distressed to find that many of his former disciples had deserted him and even become his bitterest enemies.

The confidence which the King openly expressed in the Government of Holstein-Holsteinborg did not save it from early extinction. The successful blockage of all public business by the disaffected parties in the Folketing, and the Landsting's discontent with the too lenient attitude of the Government in the matter of finance laws, led to their resignation in 1874. There could be no question of forming a Left Ministry, and the King contented himself with the appointment as Prime Minister of C. A. Fonnesbech, a gifted but weak char-

THE GOVERNMENT OF ESTRUP

acter, who had filled the place of Minister of the Interior in the late Cabinet. Both Chambers were equally delighted when his tenure of office was also wrecked by a finance law during the only session of Parliament which he survived.*

When Estrup's Government was formed in June 1875—a Government that lasted nineteen years—the National Liberals had been reduced to a very secondary position in Danish politics. The movement led by Georg Brandes and the threatened desertion of the strongest forces in the young academic world were responsible for it. The decline in the Party's fortunes determined Viggo Hørup, the bitterest opponent of the National Liberals, to consolidate the position of the Left Party in its fight for the rights of the peasants. Having failed to be elected to the Folketing in 1872, he collaborated with Holger Drachmann and Edvard Brandes, a brother of Georg, in the editorship of the new Left paper, the *Morgenbladet*. Opposition to the campaign of the Left Party drove the National Liberals into the arms of the Right, whilst the leadership remained in the hands of the landed gentry. The one most suitable to control these two forces was Estrup, who, from being the power behind successive Ministries, was now to rise to the highest place. It was by the King's direction that he set his mind on subduing the "shameless lust for power" of the Left leaders. He considered their attempts to introduce parliamentarianism as an attack on the King's right, as stated in the Constitution, to elect his Ministers freely, and he thought it his duty to defend the Landsting against the attempt of the Folketing to reduce it to a secondary place as a legislative power. In coping with his mission Estrup was, however, obliged to fall back on devices that fell foul of the Constitution. In this he was ably seconded by Nelleman, the cleverest head in the Cabinet and its Minister of Justice. Though a National Liberal, Nelleman was one of those who worked hardest to unite officials and landowners in a common fight against the peasant regiment.

From the beginning Estrup showed little mercy or respect for the Folketing. He threw out his first challenge to its authority in presenting a national defence measure which in his opinion was the measure most likely to draw the Con-

NEW POLITICAL PARTIES

servative factions together. On its being defeated, he calmly dissolved the Folketing; but the new elections returned a large majority for the Left Party. The crucial test for Estrup came when he decided to brave public opinion and overrun what was commonly considered constitutional rights in promulgating a provisional finance law immediately after the Rigsdag had closed its sessions. He can hardly be excused for having defied a clause in the Constitution which only allowed the adoption of provisional laws in time of war or of national misfortune. Notwithstanding, a section of the Left Party was induced in 1877 to ally itself with the Government. As this act of desertion caused a split in the Left Party, Berg formed a new party, known as the Radical Left, in which he shared the leadership with Hörup.

After the elections to the Folketing in 1879 and 1881 which brought gains to the Left and heavy losses to the Right, the friction between the Government and the majority in the Folketing sharpened considerably. On the one side the Cabinet were leading a movement for an increase in national defences, on the other side a new "European" radicalism was showing its head, sponsored by the University and the towns. Socialism was forging ahead and the peasants were becoming economically independent of the Conservative landowners. In these years Estrup's Government was only sustained by the fruitless efforts of Berg to bridge the difference between the extreme Radicals in his own party and the moderate Left. Berg knew only too well that dissensions in the Left Party provided Estrup with the most poignant weapon in his efforts to consolidate the position of the Landsting. Berg and Hörup's partnership did not long survive. Therefore at the end of 1884 the Left Party was split into three separate camps: Berg's latest creation of a "Danish Left," the "European" Radicals headed by Hörup, and the Moderates. When no financial law was voted in 1885, Estrup substituted for it a provisional law under a Royal Resolution. The financial law of 1886 was submitted to the Landsting without having been passed by the Folketing, and at the end of the session a new provisional law followed. Such was the procedure invariably followed in succeeding years. It is of importance to

END OF ESTRUP'S GOVERNMENT

remember that, however heated were popular passions, the spirit of revolution was foreign to the nation, apart from the fact that most of the army officers were enthusiastic supporters of the Government and of their plans for the fortification of Copenhagen. All attempts to revolt against authority were speedily suppressed. Rebellious schoolmasters and pastors were removed from their posts, and Berg found himself in trouble for daring to obstruct the police at a party meeting in Holstebro. A police officer, on attempting to seat himself in the presidential tribunal, had been forcibly ejected by Berg and his followers, each of whom was sentenced to six months' imprisonment. Although Berg's health was broken by these months of rigorous confinement, he was spared four more years before his death in 1891.

The victory of the Right and Moderates in the elections of 1892, though a temporary set back for the opposition, foreboded the early conclusion of a conciliatory agreement between parties on the urgent questions of defence and finance. Berg was then dead and Hórup was no longer a member of the Folketing. It was therefore natural that the agreement, when concluded in 1894, favoured particularly the Right. In return for the granting of an annual supply for the building and maintenance of the forts of Copenhagen and the acceptance of an army law, the hope was held out of regular financial laws in future years. Estrup now found that the moment had come for his abdicating the position he had held for nineteen years. He was replaced by Reedtz-Thott, who formed a wholly Conservative Ministry composed of men who had given their wholehearted support to the recent agreement. In making his first appearance in the Rigsdag, he made the hopeful announcement that he considered it his duty to be a "willing helper" in the work of reconciling the interests of the two Houses. For his failure, however, to include in the Cabinet any representatives of the Moderates he was to pay dearly, for, in the elections of 1895, his party suffered a severe defeat and the Left and Socialists made most gains.

Immediately after the elections Berg's long fight for political freedom was at last rewarded in the formation of a Left Reform Party, which embraced all sections of the Left save the Moder-

CHANGE TO A POPULAR REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

ates. The future was to justify fully the choice of J. C. Christensen as the leader of the new party. Though a less driving personality than Berg, he had the same gift of winning confidence, greater common sense and a higher aptitude for holding the party together. As Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Rigsdag, Christensen wielded greater power than any Minister. Alongside his party, and in a sense complementary to it, was the new "Free Conservatives" group which was founded some years later by Count Mogens Friis with the object of forming an alliance between the small and "big peasants" (landowners). In Conservative circles the feeling was generally growing that no business could be conducted except by a Ministry of the Left. A last attempt to revive the shades of Estrup was made in the appointment of Hannibal Sehested, a landowner, as Prime Minister. His Government discovered an empty Treasury and an obstinate Folketing which would only pass laws to its liking. From lack of funds the construction of the Copenhagen forts had to be suspended. The elections of 1901, in which the Conservatives scored little more votes than the Social Democrats, sealed the fate of Sehested's Ministry and brought a change in the system of Government.

The sudden change from a dictatorial régime to a popular representative Government presented all the difficulties of a novel experiment. The Left Party, who took over power after a thirty-years' struggle, was not a harmonious whole. The King may have felt the need of a change of system, but could not bring himself to acknowledge it in fact. Johan Henrik Deuntzer, the new head of Government, was no parliamentarian and had never taken an active part in politics, but, as a man popular with the Court, he seemed particularly fitted for the task of building a bridge between the King and the Left Party. Practical ability he certainly showed in the formation of a government which was representative of all sections of the Left except the Moderates. The real political force in the Government was J. C. Christensen. In the Folketing the Government's position was impregnable, even if one-third of their majority could be counted as Social Democrat in practice. It could be foreseen that the Left and

“SOCIAL RADICALS”

Social Democrats would part company as soon as the struggle with the Right was over. Another potential danger was the new class of small-holders who claimed equality with the farmers and became an organised force in 1902. There remained the Landsting, that insuperable barrier to all legislative progress.

The differences, which had previously divided the ranks of the Left Party over appointments to the Cabinet, were again to raise their head. Christensen was left with the choice of throwing in his lot with the die-hard Radicals, who wanted the dissolution of the Landsting, or of joining the Moderates, who were opposed to any policy of haste and preferred an agreement with the “Free Conservatives.” The elections to the Landsting in 1902, which returned a combined majority for the Conservative and Left Parties, reconciled him to the latter course. How long he would be able to hold the Left to this line of policy was an open question. The fate of the numerous bills introduced by the Government during their short term of office, though some of them passed into law, revealed underlying differences and exposed the weaknesses of a tri-party government. A disagreement between the Radicals and the other parties over a defence law was enough to cause a Ministerial crisis which ended in the dismissal of the Government. At the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War in 1904, General Madsen had incurred criticism for having, unbeknown to the Government, embarked on additional coastal defences. Laws on taxation, the alliance with the Free Conservatives, the question of small-holders, all these worked hand in hand with the military question. The final split came when Dr. Peter Munch, a young follower of Hørup, proclaimed in his paper, *The New Century*, that the Left must be “Social-Radicals.” A Radical Club, the members of which were at first recruited from Zealand, formed the nucleus of a new parliamentary party which sprang into existence after the fall of the Ministry in 1905. Deuntzer had at any rate accomplished his work of shepherding his country through a great period of transition.

J. C. Christensen, who succeeded Deuntzer, was the natural selection. Although he commanded in the Folketing a smaller

GOVERNMENT OF J. C. CHRISTENSEN

majority than his predecessor, his Cabinet was a more homogeneous whole, and he himself was more closely bound to the rural population than Deuntzer. Now that the Radicals had declared their independence, Christensen's power rested on the support of the Left Reform Party and the Moderates who disappeared as a separate party in 1902. The danger presented to the Government by the Radicals was not so much their numerical strength as the fact that they had stolen much of the thunder of the Left when becoming the champions of Radical ideas which had been forgotten with the years. As for the Social Democrats, they were wise enough to follow the counsels of Borgbjerg in working together with the Radicals until they could stand on their own feet as an independent party. They declared war on Christensen from the very outset.

During the first two years of Christensen's Government political interest centred on the question of the right of election, restricted or universal, to the parish and county councils. As the Left Reform Party and the Free Conservatives could never be certain of a majority in the Landsting, the closest possible alliance with the former Moderates was the only practical policy. But an Electoral Law, which was the result of a compromise between the Left Reform Party and the Free Conservatives, only obtained a passage through the Landsting because two of its military members, from interested motives, abstained from voting. The art of compromise was also successfully used in the passing of a Customs Law which was fought on the issue of Free Trade versus Tariffs. In essentials it was, however, a direct challenge to the Free Trade principles of the Left and a partial concession to the industrial magnates in the Landsting. Its principal feature was the reduction of protective duties to an average of 20 per cent.

The Government were actively debating the classical question of naval and military estimates, in which the new King, Frederick VIII (1906-12), took a particular interest, when they were suddenly shaken by an event which involved no less a personality than Alberti, the Minister of Justice, who was considered the strongest man in the Cabinet. For some time the air had been charged with rumours that he had been

THE ALBERTI SCANDAL

engaged in shady transactions as Chairman of the Peasants' Savings Bank. His self-assurance and quick-wittedness had freed him from any suspicions on the part of his colleagues, and most of all Christensen. Suspicions grew greater when Borgbjerg in the Folketing openly attacked him for having abused his position in his own interests. Under the pretence that there would be a run on the Bank unless precautionary steps were taken, Alberti obtained from Christensen, who was also acting Minister of Finance, a short-term loan of one and a half million Kroner. Christensen kept the matter secret from his colleagues, but the affair became public knowledge when Alberti, having previously resigned his office, reported himself to the police as guilty of frauds to the extent of 9 million Kroner. He had sold in person all the holdings of the Bank and had produced false evidence that the funds were existent. The Folketing then sanctioned the formation of a new majority Government which was taken over by N. Neergaard. Christensen not only survived the scandal, but was once again to occupy the highest offices of State.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE Government of Neergaard was the first of three which Denmark was to enjoy within the years 1908-10 and these years of government brought very meagre results. Neergaard, who had been chosen because of the central position he occupied in the Left groups, fell like Deutzner to political squabbles over the defence question, and this same question, directly or indirectly, decided the fate of his successors, Count Holstein-Ledreborg and C. T. Zahle. Holstein's chances of success were remote from the beginning. Agreement between the Left groups, which he made the condition of accepting office, was at the time unattainable. He had moreover, as a distinguished member of the Folketing twenty years back, shown himself a strong opponent of the defence measures. Notwithstanding, it was he who succeeded in putting through a law for the strengthening of the existing defences, and for their destruction in 1922; but as a half-way measure it pleased no single party, and his Government was defeated on a vote of confidence. The Radicals, who next came in with C. T. Zahle at their head, wanted no fortifications at all and a reduction in military expenditure and, for this act of parsimony, were defeated in the elections of 1910, which were fought on the catch-words: "defence or no defence." Klaus Berntsen was then asked by the King to form a government.

Although Berntsen was a typical member of the Left Party, a casual glance at the political horizon which had formed itself after the recent elections was sufficient to convince him that his only way to salvation was to hold out the hand to the Right. The Left did indeed control half the votes in the Folketing, but its position was less secure in the Upper House where, even with the support of the Free Conservatives, it would be far short of a majority. The programme of his

THE CONSTITUTION PARTIES

Government was neatly marked out over a period of three years; in the first the settlement of the defence measures, in the second the putting in order of the finances, and in the third a change in the Constitution which was demanded by all political parties. But the appearance of a budget with a deficit of fifty-one million Kroner was to upset his calculations. The Government's proposals for making good this deficit by new indirect taxes on alcohol and cigarettes was opposed by all sides. The Social Democrats demanded an income tax on a sliding scale, and the Right and Free Conservatives preferred taxes on matches, tobacco and bicycles. The Free Conservatives finally produced a financial bill which became law in 1912 and which lowered the proposed taxes on alcohol and the income tax. Berntsen had at any rate been successful in his aims at financial reconstruction.

But Berntsen's place in history lay in another direction: the Constitution. In the autumn of 1912 he submitted a proposal which meant a break with the Constitution of 1866 and a return to the fundamental principles of the June Constitution. The plan was for the granting of electoral rights to all men and women of 25 years and over; the number of the members of the Folketing was to be fixed by law but was not to exceed 132, and elections were to take place every four years. Of the sixty-six members of the Landsting twelve were to be elected by that House. The bill, which was warmly supported by the Radicals and Social Democrats, had an easy passage through the Folketing. Its defeat by two votes in the Landsting merely foreshadowed the end of a Constitution which for a generation long had made that body the strongest force in Danish politics.

The Social Democrats and Radicals, in the fear that their hopes of ultimate victory would be lost unless they followed the Government, agreed to an "election alliance" between the three Constitution parties. Notwithstanding that the Radicals and Socialists obtained a majority in the next elections to the Folketing, they preferred that the Government should remain sitting as the better guarantee for the passing of the Law on the Constitution. As, however, the Left Party had been so weakened by the elections that it could no longer take

THE NEW CONSTITUTION

the lead or act alone in the matter of the Constitution, the Government decided to resign.

In the midst of these happenings Frederick VIII died suddenly at Hamburg and was succeeded by his son the present King Christian X in 1912. Seven years earlier his brother Charles had been elected to the Norwegian throne after the separation of Norway from Sweden.

The decision of Berntsen to resign, which was dictated more from anger than absolute necessity, was not altogether welcome to the opposition parties. The Radicals were asking themselves whether the affair of the Constitution stood a better chance under a government of Social Democrats than under a single-party government. Zahle suggested a combination of all three parties. On Christensen refusing to be party to the scheme, Zahle obeyed the King's long-given commands to form a Ministry though he did not consent before he had been promised the support of Thorvald Stauning as leader of the Social Democrats. In the new Government Erik Scavenius became Foreign Minister and P. Munch the Minister of Defence.

When Estrup died at the end of 1913, the three "Constitution" parties were placed on a level with the Right and Free Conservatives in the Landsting. Good teamwork between the three parties was all that was needed to force a decision. But these hopes were shattered on Christensen declaring that he and his followers would vote against Berntsen's proposals for a Constitution when they came before the Landsting. It was evident that their pride would not be satisfied or their co-operation secured unless the changes in the Constitution were of their own choosing. This goes to explain why the terms of an agreement finally concluded on the 12th March 1914 between the three parties originated with the Left Party. The principal points were that voters to the Landsting should be over 35 years of age, and that the Landsting could be dissolved when it rejected a bill passed by the Folketing on its first presentation and on its second passing after new elections. The crown members of the Landsting would be allowed to preserve their seats in the "first eight years." Some days later, a general agreement

DISSOLUTION OF LANDSTING

was reached on the Electoral Bill which limited the numbers of members of the Folketing to 120 with twenty supplementary mandates distributed amongst the leading towns, the islands and Jutland.

On the 9th June 1914 the Folketing accepted the proposed changes in the Constitution by 102 votes to 2. Before the submission of the bill to the Landsting, the Right and Free Conservatives declared in writing that they would not take part in the vote. The Prime Minister retorted that their action lay "outside the provisions of the Constitution and that the answer must be dissolution." The dissolution of the Landsting, which was the first since 1866, seriously affected the position of the Crown members. This vexed question was warmly debated between the King and his Ministers. In a meeting of the Council, His Majesty stated: "I express as my wish that the decision on the Constitution in the Landsting shall be based on the result of the elections, but I also wish to maintain that it is my opinion that the dissolution of the Landsting should not affect Crown members." Zahle replied that the Crown members were included in the dissolution; if his Government were unable after the elections to convince His Majesty of its "political necessity," it would be decisive for his continuance in office.

On the 13th June the Landsting was dissolved. In the elections that followed, it was the general feeling that the constitutional question must be settled once and for all. The elections resulted in a far greater success for the "Constitution" parties that had been anticipated. So overwhelming was the victory that the matter of the Crown members was no longer of any importance. But owing to the outbreak of war, neither of the two bills on the Constitution and Elections reached the Statute Book until a year later.

In the fifty years that preceded the Great War, the economic and social life of Denmark was completely transformed. What characterised most agriculture during this period was its entry into new forms of production: the growth of corn, after the fall in prices, was abandoned for the production of butter, meat, bacon and eggs. From the early 'nineties England became, and remains to this day, by far the largest importer

INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

of Danish bacon. Side by side with this increase in production was the growth of a communal spirit amongst the peasants of which the co-operative movement, which spread rapidly year by year, was the most striking example. Agricultural societies, the agricultural and the folk high schools, all played their part in raising the peasants to a higher intellectual level. It was not until the end of the nineteenth century that the small-holders were growing into a separate class. Then there was little to be seen of the former tenant farmer.

The industrial revolution in Denmark opened about the year 1870 when the Treaty of Vienna had freed Danish industry from competition with Holstein. New industries, for which the banks supplied capital, sprang into existence. Many of them were to become the country's greatest undertakings, such as the Royal Porcelain Factory, the spirit factories of Aalborg and Burmeister and Wain. With the coming of Socialism in the 'sixties, industry had to adapt itself to the demands of the Trade Unions for higher wages. When labour had become sufficiently organised, employers and employees, each with their association, frequently came to blows. There was a lock-out in 1899 involving 35,000 persons. The Government promptly intervened with the introduction of a Court of Arbitration to settle disputes which ensured a brief period of armed peace. It is of interest to note that within the space of forty years, wages so much increased that, in spite of rising prices, the purchasing power of the average worker almost doubled. In the years 1864-1914 the population of Denmark rose from 1,700,000 to 2,800,000. The greatest increase was in Copenhagen—600,000 as compared with 180,000.

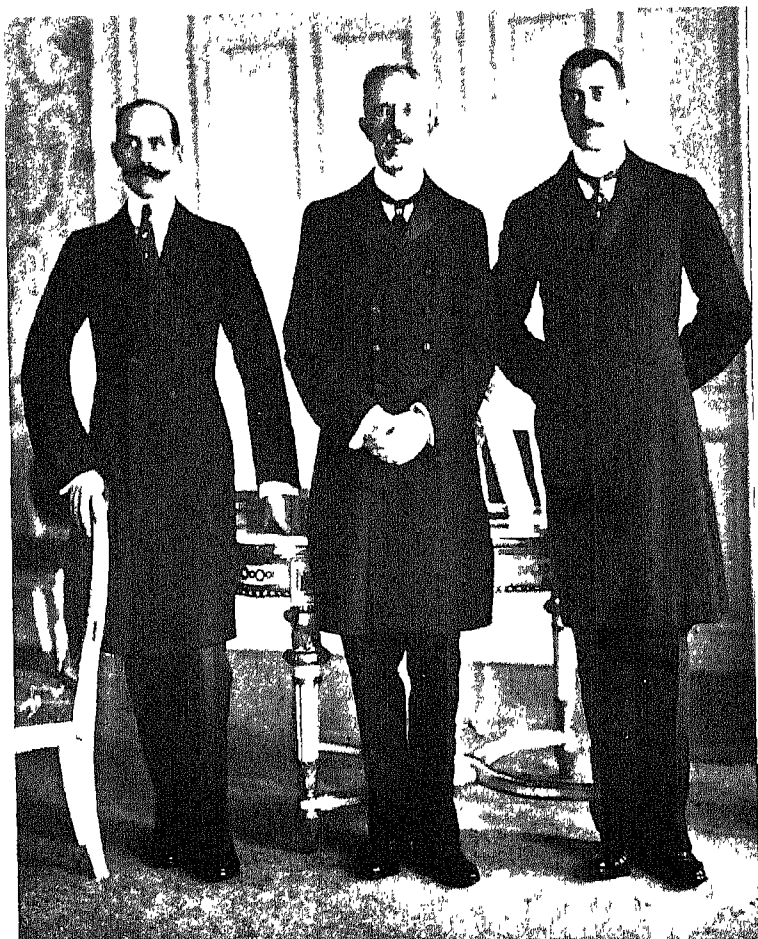
With the threat of war approaching, the Danish Government began to consider their policy in such an event. There could be no doubt of Denmark's determination to remain neutral, though Germany could not rid her mind of the possibility that Denmark's animosity might be turned against her. Practically defenceless and with no hope of outside assistance if Germany crossed her frontier, Denmark must do all she could to free her of these suspicions. On the 28th July 1914

DENMARK AT THE BEGINNING OF THE GREAT WAR

the German Minister in Copenhagen, Count Brockdorff-Rantzau, warned the Danish Government that any military preparations on the part of Denmark would lead to German reprisals, and two days later the German Foreign Secretary demanded an assurance of "benevolent neutrality," and an undertaking not to adopt any military measures before Germany mobilised. These assurances having been given, Count Moltke, the Danish Minister in Berlin, was informed that Germany entertained no aggressive intentions towards Denmark. On the 1st August Denmark declared that she would remain neutral in the war that had opened between Serbia and Austria. A similar declaration was made on the outbreak of hostilities between Germany and Russia, and between Germany and France.

On the night of the 4th August, when England declared war on Germany, the Germans began to lay mines in the southern side of the Langeland Belt. Next day the Danish Government were asked by the German Minister in Copenhagen whether they wished to close the Great Belt to both parties at war. The Danish Cabinet hesitated for a time between mobilisation and the laying of mines in the Great Belt and the Little Belt. In the end they decided that the two should be mined, that auxiliary forces should be called up to fill the divisions of the line, and that the possibility of forming a Coalition Government should be carefully examined. In answer to the fears of party leaders and Ministers that England might disapprove the laying of mines in the Belts, King Christian addressed a telegram to King George who replied that he well understood Denmark's difficult position. Despite protestations of friendship and calming assurances from Wilhelmstrasse, there were many in Denmark who feared that she would be unable to keep out of the conflict. Those who stood behind the Government did not show the least uneasiness that decisions in those hazardous times lay with a Ministry which had no sympathy for, or confidence in, the military leaders. Their opponents naturally thought otherwise.

The precautions which Denmark took, side by side with her military measures, for safeguarding her economic interests after the outbreak of war placed her in a comparatively favour-



THREE NORTHERN KINGS

DENMARK'S DEPENDENCE ON ENGLAND AND GERMANY

able position at the end of the year. There was no scarcity of necessary goods, but import restrictions caused a sharp rise in prices which benefited greatly all those engaged in industry and agriculture. The first acts of the Government were to restrict exports and to regulate prices through a special commission presided over by Christian Hage, a former Cabinet Minister. In the first days of the war everything pointed to the complete stoppage of the shipping trade owing to mines and submarines. The danger was brought realistically home when the Danish ship *Maryland* struck a mine and sank.

The attitude of the warring nations towards Danish shipping was therefore of vital importance. England had no way of preventing merchandise being sent from Denmark to Germany over the Jutish frontier and through the Baltic Sea but could cut off Denmark's supplies of coal, food-stuffs, etcetera, on the North Sea route. Germany was master of the west coast and the Kattegat and could hinder the shipment of Danish agricultural produce to England. Germany's declaration that she would not temporarily hamper the export of agricultural goods was made before England declared war. In October England signed an agreement with Denmark allowing her the import of contraband goods on the Danish Government giving a guarantee that they would not be transferred to Germany. Denmark could congratulate herself that, in her endeavours to keep on the right side of both parties, she had been singularly successful and had obtained more favourable conditions than perhaps any other neutral State. Common dangers had the effect of drawing together the three Scandinavian countries in a common policy. On the initiative of King Gustav, the three monarchs met at Malmö at the end of 1914. It was the first time since the separation of Norway from Sweden that the heads of these kindred nations met in friendly conference. The meeting was itself a guarantee that the three States would act in concert during the coming years.

Denmark's interest in her external problems was not allowed to distract her attention from the urgent call on her to settle finally the question of the Constitution. What would have been probably impossible in time of peace became possible in time of war. Many of the Right Party were convinced

LAW OF THE CONSTITUTION

that they would obtain better terms than when the war was over. In March 1915 discussions began between representatives of the Right and the Government. The Right desired most that the Electoral Law would assure fair representation to parties. Various changes were made in the draft proposals prepared in the previous year and were approved by all but a section of the Right and the Left Parties. The Landsting was now to consist of seventy-two members of which eighteen were to be elected by the outgoing Landsting according to proportional representation; provision was made for an Electoral Law securing equal representation for all parties; the right of voting for those of twenty-five years was to be enforced progressively and to be extended to women; a third of the Folketing could demand the deferment of expropriation laws until after fresh elections to that body; parents were allowed to place their children in schools outside the National Schools when they provided equally good education. The new Constitution was to come into force one year after its acceptance. Changes in it were to be submitted to a plebiscite.

On the 22nd April 1915 the bill was passed in the Landsting and on the following day by an almost unanimous vote in the Folketing. It had been arranged that elections to the Rigsdag should take place before the bill was presented for the second reading. All parties had agreed beforehand to waive their political interests. The new Law of the Constitution, having been finally accepted by the Rigsdag, was signed by the King on the 5th June 1915. Under the Law the two Houses were elected by universal suffrage. Women celebrated the occasion by marching in procession to the Royal Castle and the Rigsdag.

The rapidity with which the new Constitution had been passed was due to the determination of the Government to profit by the willingness of the Conservatives to negotiate when they felt that they had nothing to gain by a policy of procrastination. Where the Government found themselves in difficulties was in their rejection of the demand for higher military expenditure and in a commercial policy which was thought to favour Germany. There would be an end to their weighty responsibilities if a Coalition Government could be formed which was representative of all parties. But to this

SALE OF DANISH WEST INDIES TO U.S.A.

the Left objected. Defeated of their object the Government decided to capture public opinion on the issue of neutrality. This hope was realised in an Order of the Day (*Dagsorden*) which declared that the Folketing were at one in agreeing that no Government could be supported if they did not acknowledge the necessity of absolute neutrality in the war. But press agitations continued and attacked so strongly the commercial policy of the Government that an Act was passed prohibiting attacks on governmental decisions in matters of exports and imports and all attempts to stir up feelings against nations at war. The Government rested secure in the reluctance of the Conservative People's Party—a new combination of Conservatives and Free Conservatives—to accept a change of Ministry in the difficult times. Now that all parties had consented to forgo elections, political strife came to an end.

The Danish Government were, however, not prepared for the sudden revival of the long-debated question of the sale to the United States of America of the Danish West Indies.¹ The question had both a military and a political aspect. In 1915 the Press of the United States hinted that for military reasons, such as the building of the Panama Canal and the World War, it might be necessary to occupy the islands, though there was no intention to harm Danish interests. The threat of occupation called for negotiations. Denmark demanded 100 million Kroner as compensation, a far higher figure than had ever been mentioned in previous discussions, and the recognition by the United States of her rights to the whole of Greenland. The negotiations came to a head at the beginning of August 1916, when there were rumours of war breaking out between the United States and Germany. It was then agreed that the islands of St. Croix,² St. Thomas and St. Jan should be surrendered to the States for the sum of 25 million dollars; Danish citizens residing in the islands could choose whether they wished to remain or leave; if

¹ The Danish Government refused to consider the proposal of the U.S.A. made in 1913 for the sale of the Islands.

² St Croix was purchased by Denmark in 1733. The King of Denmark in 1754 took over St. Thomas, which became the seat of Government for the three islands.

FORMATION OF COALITION GOVERNMENT

choosing to remain, they might opt for Danish nationality ; finally, the United States would recognise Denmark's supreme right to the whole of Greenland.

Political opposition to the agreement was not expected by the Government. To their great surprise, the Left as well as the Conservatives denounced the surrender of the islands as a national humiliation. When approval was requested in the Folketing, these two parties moved that the question should be decided by a debate in the Rigsdag under the conditions of the new Constitution. The motion was rejected and the approval of the agreement by a plebiscite was voted. Owing to the uncertainty of its fate in the Landsting, the King suggested to the Cabinet that, in order to avoid elections, a new government should be appointed representative of all parties. In view of the popular agitation fomented by the Left and the Conservatives, Zahle feared for the existence of his Government and was inclined to accept the royal suggestion. Count Mogens Friis then came to the rescue with a proposal which was accepted by all parties. The Cabinet was to include one representative for each of the outside parties as Minister without portfolio. They were to take part in Cabinet meetings and should each for himself have the right to demand the postponement of bills and important official acts, until his party had been consulted thereon. The enforcement of the Constitution was to be deferred until 5th June 1917. A special committee was to publish its report on the proposed sale of the Danish West Indies whereafter a popular vote would be taken. The new Ministers without portfolio were Thorvald Stauning for the Social Democrats, J. C. Christensen for the Left, and Christian Rottböll for the Conservative People's Party. Though there was much excitement over the plebiscite, the votes cast were less than usual. The agreement for the sale of the islands, which had already been ratified by the United States, was approved by a substantial majority. The telling of the votes showed that the Radicals and Social Democrats had voted for, and the Conservatives and some of the Left against, the sale. On its final reference to the Folketing and the Landsting, both Houses stood by the verdict of the electorate.

AGREEMENTS WITH GERMANY AND ENGLAND

Side by side with these developments, economic life in Denmark was adapting itself to the conditions and inhibitions of an enemy-bordering State. Her first and greatest difficulty was to conform at once with the wishes of the Allies that she should reduce the amount of her agricultural exports to Germany. Nor could she properly give up her normal exports to that country when she was allowed to send unhindered to England large agricultural consignments. It was self-evident to Germany that, if she hindered unduly Danish exports to England, that country would have less interest in delivering to Denmark necessary food-stuffs which might find their way across the Danish southern frontier.

In June 1915 Denmark signed an agreement with England whereby the latter withdrew her demands regarding the export of Danish goods to Germany but maintained that contraband goods would only be allowed free shipment to Denmark if guarantees were given that they would not be re-exported to Germany. It should be mentioned that the German Declaration of the 4th February 1915, establishing a danger zone round England, had seriously threatened Danish exports to England and resulted in the three Scandinavian lands opening discussions for the convoying of ships over the North Sea. The situation was further aggravated when England, in replying to the German Declaration, laid down that all ships laden with goods destined for Germany must be taken to England, even if they carried no contraband goods. It followed in practice that a number of Danish ships were taken into English harbours for examination and that goods intended only for Denmark were held up for a considerable time. In May, however, an arrangement was made between the British authorities and the Danish Industrial Council and Merchants' Association whereby guarantees were given that certain imported goods should not be re-exported to Germany. A similar agreement had been previously concluded with Germany in relation to goods sent from that country to Denmark.

Taken all together, 1915 and 1916 were prosperous years for Denmark who managed to maintain her exports and imports at the pre-war figure. Her particular problem was the regulation and distribution of supplies, especially corn,

REQUISITIONS AND COMPULSORY VOYAGES

which were controlled by the Minister of the Interior aided by a special Commission. Maximum prices were fixed for all home products, but without lasting results. Taxable incomes in 1916 were about 100 per cent higher than in 1914 and were as high in the provinces as in the towns. But State expenditure demanded new taxes, and the greatest source of revenue was the shipping trade. The first efforts of the Government to lower the freight for coal and maize were unsuccessful, and it was only after long negotiations that the ship-owners were induced to agree to lower freights for necessary imports and to pay a monthly tax of nearly one million Kroner. The agreement only lasted thirteen months as it was wrecked by submarine warfare.

A month after the rejection of President Wilson's peace proposals by the Allied Powers, Count Rantzau informed the Danish Government that, in the near waters of England, France and Italy, every ship, enemy or neutral, with or without contraband, even if on its way from one neutral harbour to another, would be prevented from sailing, which meant in practice that it would be torpedoed without notice. After joint consultation, the three Scandinavian Governments addressed a note of protest to the Central Powers against their violation of international practice. Denmark eventually found a way out of her difficulties by allowing some of her ships to sail round to Bergen whence they were convoyed by British ships. When the news of this route was announced in the Danish press, a judicial order was issued forbidding the notification, by writ or word, of any movements of Danish ships.

Requisitions and compulsory voyages were features of the agreement concluded with England on the 20th January 1917. It assured the speedy clearing of ships in Halifax, instead of Kirkwall, on condition that they carried approved cargo. England offered Denmark 100,000 tons of coal a month in return for which Denmark surrendered 200,000 tons of her shipping. Under a simultaneous agreement with Germany, the latter allowed free passage to Danish ships sailing to America provided that they carried no contraband; Denmark, as a reciprocal concession, waived the prohibition on the export of horses.

PROHIBITIVE MEASURES AGAINST DENMARK

Soon reports began to circulate in London and Paris that Germany was being approvisioned by Denmark. These rumours were sufficient to overthrow the recent trade agreement with England and led to her refusal to issue any further letters of assurance for goods going to Denmark. At the same time came the American prohibition of the export of corn and food-stuffs. Denmark received the final blow when England gave notice that all exports to Denmark, with the exception of coal, would be stopped. The only course that remained to Denmark was to fill the gap by increasing her trade with the Central Powers and with Norway and Sweden. Denmark delivered to Sweden butter and bacon in exchange for raw stuffs required for industry. Norway provided saltpetre in exchange for corn. Negotiations with Germany resulted in credit agreements which were renewable every four months. Danish banks gave commercial credit for a percentage of exports from Denmark to Germany in order to keep the mark steady. The value of Danish exports to Germany in the first four months amounted to 150 million Kroner. Exports were chiefly in bacon and butter. Denmark received in return iron, ship-building material and salt. The agreement ended with the armistice when Germany was forbidden to conclude commercial agreements with neutral countries.

Submarine warfare and the entry of the U.S.A. into the war did much to stultify Denmark's efforts to maintain her trade through these channels. Rising prices atoned for the loss of foreign trade in the years 1916 to 1918. But changing conditions placed great difficulties in the way of obtaining necessary imports and of nourishing the masses. As a natural result of the blockade the State intervened for the purpose of safeguarding supplies and distributing them fairly. In many cases the end was achieved without State intervention. The people jibbed at any interference with private business and personal freedom. In February 1917 the prospect of a poor harvest foreshadowed a critical situation unless timely action was taken. During the following months the State found it necessary to take control of all foreign wheat in the country and of all holdings of foreign corn. Under the Corn Law passed in the month of August the State assumed com-

A MINISTERIAL CRISIS

plete control of the collection and distribution of nearly all agricultural products in the country. The lack of animal food-stuffs had caused a great shrinking in Danish production.

The war years, taken altogether, favoured Denmark's economic position in relation to foreign countries. But the post-war years presented many problems. A great part of the land had gone out of cultivation. The greatest problem of all was North Schleswig.

Peaceful relations between the titular Ministers and the Ministers without portfolio in the Coalition Government could only be preserved so long as they were left in peace by an habitually excitable Press. But the fury of the Opposition Press was let loose in the spring of 1917 and a Government crisis seriously threatened when Stauning attended a meeting of Social Democrats in Stockholm. It was an international meeting called to discuss the ways of promoting peace amongst nations. As the German Government had given the meeting their approval and the Allied Powers had done the opposite, it could not be characterised as other than pro-German. Stauning's explanation that he accepted the views of the meeting that the northern countries should not take the initiative in peace negotiations took the sting out of a campaign launched at him by a hostile Press which also accused him of making an attack on the U.S.A. Yet so deep was the feeling aroused in Conservative circles that Rottbøll was requested to withdraw from the Cabinet; but the King bade him return.

At the time set for the elections to the Rigsdag at the beginning of 1918—they had been postponed year after year on account of the war—it was a foregone conclusion that the main issue would be the economic policy of the Government. The interests of the consumers, as represented by the Government were set against the interests of the producers, as backed by the Opposition. In the belief that party loyalties came first, both J. C. Christensen and Rottbøll resigned from the Ministry three weeks before the elections. They resulted in a majority of 2 for the Radicals and Social Democrats, though the Left recorded the greater number of votes. In the

SECRET' NEGOTIATIONS WITH GERMANY

elections to the Landsting, the Conservatives and the Left gained a substantial majority.

The announcement of the Armistice on 11th November 1918 was welcomed by nearly all circles in Denmark as pre-saging the removal of war privations and the restoration of South Jutland to Denmark. During the war the Danes had prudently avoided all discussions of the question from fear of arousing German suspicions. But the escape from self-restraint on its conclusion made reaction all the greater. Some clamoured for a return to the historic frontier which might mean either a frontier line to include the old Danevirke line, or the Eider. Many wanted the frontier decided by a plebiscite. In a separate camp stood the Radicals and H. P. Hanssen who thought that the restoration should be effected by a free vote in agreement with Germany. To clear the air of these ambiguities and to direct Denmark into the right path, help was sought in the declaration made in the Reichstag on 14th November by Dr. Solf, the German Foreign Minister. "The German Government," he said, "adopt the point of view that the question of North Schleswig should be resolved in accordance with the peace proposals of President Wilson and on the basis of the right to decide the fate of the population concerned." The fourteen points of President Wilson made no mention of Schleswig, but the right of nations to decide their fate was formally recognised. The President, only nine days before the Armistice, had made very promising assurances in a letter to Pastor Boholdt. "I have no doubt," he wrote, "that your voice and those of your compatriots will be heard and that the aim of the nation to repair an evil that has been emphasised by long years of oppression, will be realised."

The Danish Government, with Erik Scavenius as Foreign Minister, and H. P. Hanssen as expert adviser, had ever since October pursued the path, relentlessly but secretly, of settling the affairs of Schleswig by direct negotiation with Germany, and were long in realising that the fate of North Schleswig depended on the Allies to whom it owed its deliverance. H. P. Hanssen, who died in 1936, was a highly intelligent man and was at one time the most popular figure in Schleswig but, as a political visionary, could not look beyond Schleswig

THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE

and Berlin. As the most prominent of the members of the Reichstag which represented Schleswig, he had been in daily contact with Germany's leading politicians. Another person who apparently took an important part in the *unoffizielle Besprechungen*, as Count Rantzau called them, was Professor Aage Friis who did not mince matters in his report on a visit to Berlin in November 1918. Rumours of these negotiations, which had reached the ears of the British, French and Italian representatives in Copenhagen, were officially denied by Scavenius though, from a long speech made in a secret session of the Rigsdag on 23rd October, it would seem that he was bent on making a separate arrangement with Germany.

On the 8th January 1919 Kammerherre Bernhoft was appointed to represent Denmark at the coming Peace Conference, with H. V. Clausen as his expert adviser. He was instructed to work for a plebiscite which would cover North Schleswig as a whole and certain districts in mid-Schleswig which had an undoubted Danish majority. The voting districts should be evacuated by German troops and the voting should be under the control of a mixed commission of Danes and Germans with a Swedish chairman.

The Peace Conference which assembled in Paris in January assigned the question of Schleswig to the Belgo-Danish Committee presided over by Monsieur Tardieu. Bernhoft, whatever his personal feelings, considered that he must content himself with the mere registering of his instructions. The uncertainty caused by the actions of the Zahle Cabinet induced the Schleswig Committee to send its own representative to Paris, Dr. J. Collin, who on his arrival deposed with the Secretariat a memorandum which in its conclusion demanded a plebiscite in mid-Schleswig as far as the frontier Slien-Danevirke-Husum.

The Committee opened its proceedings on 25th February with the intimation that they should be terminated on 8th March. In his exposé Bernhoft put forward the demands of his Government that the voting in North Schleswig should be *en bloc* and in the more southern districts by parishes. The freedom of the plebiscite must be assured by an International Commission. He maintained a discreet silence on

SETTLEMENT OF ZONES

the part of his instructions which referred to a Dano-German Commission. The introductory address of Monsieur Laroche, a sub-director of the French Foreign Ministry, must have struck with surprise all but the supporters of the frontier as decided by a plebiscite. "In the Schleswig question," said Monsieur Laroche, "we find ourselves in a different position from that which has been presented to us in the other committees. We are face to face with a Government which asks for less than they have the right to demand." At the end of the meeting it was agreed to hold a plebiscite in two separate zones and to abide by Bernhoft's proposal in regard to the frontier of the first zone.

Some days later arrived the Danish Parliamentary Delegation. It included representatives from each party: Niels Neergaard of the Left, Alexander Foss, a Conservative member of the Landsting, P. Munch, and M. C. V. Bramsnaes of the Socialist Party; also the former Schleswiger deputies to the Reichstag, and H. N. Andersen, director of the East Asiatic Company. It arrived too late to be of any material use but was able to give the assurances needed on the rights of minorities. Count Bent Holstein, however, who arrived immediately after the departure of the Delegation as the representative of certain groups in South Schleswig, was successful in obtaining the Committee's consent to the inclusion in the plebiscite of the Eiderstedt district in South Schleswig despite the protestations of the British delegates. Dr. Collin and Count Holstein seemed to have won a signal victory. This *démarche* was not known to the Danish Government until a month later when it was made the subject of heated debates in the political committee of the Rigsdag. Bernhoft was instructed to advise the Belgo-Danish Committee that the Danish Government adhered to their former point of view. Mr. Lloyd George and President Wilson, as members of the Four Men's Committee, saw no reason to go against the wishes of the Danish Government, and the southern part of Schleswig, which had been established as a third zone, was struck out of the Treaty.

The Treaty was signed on 28th June 1919 and awaited ratification by Germany and the three leading Allied Powers. There was to be a general plebiscite in the first zone; in the

RESTLESSNESS IN SOUTH JUTLAND

second zone the plebiscite was to be divided over parishes so that the Allied Powers could draw a boundary-line "which rests on the result of the plebiscite and which takes into consideration the special geographical and economic conditions of the parts concerned." Both zones were to be evacuated by German troops and officials within ten days after the ratification of the Treaty. The administration was to be taken over by an International Commission comprising three representatives of the chief Allied Powers, a Swede and a Norwegian: Danish and German advisers would be placed at its disposal. In the first zone the plebiscite was to take place three weeks after the evacuation, in the second zone at least five weeks after the plebiscite in the first zone.

As the Treaty stood, it differed only in minor particulars from the original proposals presented by the Danish Government. The long interval between its signature and ratification was an uneasy time for the inhabitants of South Jutland. Of means of subsistence there were little despite a temporary lifting of the blockade which was still in force against Germany. The decisions of the Peace Treaty did not alienate the feelings of embitterment with a government which had placed every hindrance in their way. What would it have mattered if a plebiscite in the third zone had slightly favoured the Germans in the first and second zone? They cherished the belief that there would be as many National votes in the third as in the second zone. It had been Bent Holstein's belief, when he had proposed the inclusion of the third zone, "that many of the German inhabitants would have voted for incorporation in Denmark rather than to join up with a defeated and disorganised Germany. In the autumn of 1919 and beginning of 1920 the agitation in South Jutland against the Government knew no limits.

By the 10th January 1920, when the Treaty was ratified by the three principal Allied Powers, the preparations for the plebiscite were in full swing. The International Commission consisted of Sir Charles Marling, the British Minister in Copenhagen as President, Monsieur Paul Claudel, the French Minister, and representing Sweden and Norway respectively were O. F. von Sydow a former Prime Minister, and Thomas

DENMARK AND ICELAND

Hefstye, the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs. The evacuation took place while an English-French squadron lay off Flensburg Fjord. English and French troops occupied the two zones. The plebiscite in the first zone gave Denmark a 75 per cent majority. In the second zone the position was reversed and the Germans obtained an 80 per cent majority. It was said that the Danes had little interest in recording their votes in the second zone because the feeling was prevalent that Denmark would decline to incorporate it, however much they voted. The greatest indignation was felt that Flensburg had not been returned to Denmark and numerous meetings of protest were held throughout the country. From the conviction that the Ministry could no longer be sure of a majority in the Landsting on account of their South Jutland policy, the King ordered that new elections should be held. Zahle replied that this was out of the question while the three parties were engaged in the framing of a new Electoral Law. The Cabinet was accordingly dismissed by the King, but his decision made no difference to the final settlement of the new boundary. The Government of the Radicals had fallen owing to their failure to understand Danish mentality and to their underestimating the possibilities of a new national orientation in Flensburg and Central Schleswig.

In 1918 the question of Iceland's position in relation to Denmark, the subject of many years' deliberations, was finally settled. Under a new law Denmark and Iceland were declared free and sovereign States under one monarch. The citizens of both countries enjoyed equal rights. Denmark continued to administer the foreign relations of Iceland who would maintain a representative in the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs to deal with Icelandic affairs. A Danish-Icelandic body, the half of it elected by the Alting, the other half by the Rigsdag, was to meet alternately in the two countries to discuss common interests. After 1940 either the Rigsdag or the Alting could apply for the revision of the Law. In the new Constitution of 1920 it was stipulated that Icelandic questions should be presented to the King in the Icelandic Council of State ; outside Iceland the King could hold a similar Council with an Icelandic Minister.

A GENERAL STRIKE

Before the first zone of Schleswig could be taken over by Denmark, the constitutional crisis had come to an end. Although the King's action in dismissing Zahle could not take effect before a new government was nominated, it was looked on as a *coup d'état* by the Social Democrats. The Trade Unions in Copenhagen threatened a general strike unless the Government were reinstated and the Rigsdag was summoned to pass the Electoral Law. As a temporary measure and pending new elections the King appointed a non-political business Government headed by Otto Liebe, a prominent lawyer. On the same day as this decision was taken the Social Democratic groups in the Rigsdag passed a resolution for the establishment of a Republic and on the following day the joint Trade Unions proclaimed a general strike "with a view to the summoning of the Rigsdag, the introduction of a new Electoral Law and thereafter an honest election."

The situation was tense even if allowance is made for the habitual reluctance of the Danes to engage in acts of violence. With a view to ending the strike, Social Democrats, Radicals and Christian Socialists marched in procession to Amalienborg Palace and petitioned the King to appoint a government with Parliamentary support and "without responsibility for the actual dispute." The King then summoned a meeting of political leaders, among them J. C. Christensen and Stauning, and at Easter-time all parties were ready to submit to an election. Meanwhile a provisional Government was installed which was chiefly composed of civil servants. Their first act was to request the Governments of the Great Powers to postpone the fixing of the boundary until the elections had returned a new government.

Prior to the elections feeling had so cooled down that most parties agreed not to make the Schleswig question a party issue. The result of the elections was more likely to turn on the widespread discontent with the administrative policy of the Radical Government and the fury of the peasants and middle classes that the workmen should have used a general strike as a weapon in political strife. These forebodings were fulfilled in the elections: a halving in the votes for the Radicals

THE GOVERNMENT OF NEERGAARD

and the emergence of the Left Party as the only winner. As the natural result a Left Government was formed with N. Neergaard as Prime Minister, Harald Scavenius as Foreign Minister and Thomas Madsen-Mygdal as Minister of Agriculture. J. C. Christensen, who had refused to take over the Government, was appointed Minister of the Church. The success of the Government in obtaining voluntary labour in the docks, where the strike was felt most, induced the strikers to return to work. The Government were then free to turn their attention to the revision of the Constitution as necessitated by the annexation of new territory. The only changes of any importance were a temporary reduction in the age limit to 25 years for those qualified to vote in elections and the stipulation that the King must obtain the sanction of the Government in power for a declaration of war and for the conclusion of peace. The members of the Folketing were increased from 140 to 152 and of the Landsting from seventy-two to seventy-eight, of which nineteen were elected by that body.

The elections to the Rigsdag which were required in order that the amended Constitution could be put into force left the balance of political power practically unaltered. The Left Party (Venstre) remained the strongest, though the Social Democrats were running close at its heels. The Cabinet, with a majority of the Left and Conservative Parties in both Houses had a stronger political backing than had ever been enjoyed by the Radical Government. With this sense of strength they entered the field as partisans of the Danes in mid-Schleswig in an effort to effect an internationalisation of territory denied to them by the plebiscite which was all that Neergaard needed. However deep his sympathy with mid-Schleswig he might have foreseen that any scheme of this nature would be certain of rejection by the Great Powers who regarded the boundary question as a closed chapter. He gave no official support to the delegation from mid-Schleswig which was trying to enlist the support of London and Paris for the restoration of the territory to Denmark. Though sympathetically received in both these countries, the delegation received no encouragement in either, nor had the Government any success in their plans for inter-

SIGNATURE OF TREATY CEDING NORTH SCHLESWIG

nationalisation. Harold Scavenius was obliged to declare before the Rigsdag's Committee: "We are confronted with a final decision and we, as well as all those who are of the same mind, must bow to it."

On the 15th June 1920 the final decision of the Ambassadors' Conference on the Schleswig question was officially notified to Germany and Denmark. From that date Denmark was in virtual occupation of North Schleswig. Without waiting for Germany's signature the Treaty authorising the surrender, as from the 15th June, of North Schleswig to Denmark was signed at the Quai d'Orsay on 5th July between Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan on the one side and Denmark, as represented by Kammerherre Bernhoft, on the other side, with the reservation that the territory in question could not be alienated without the consent of the League of Nations.

The early days of July 1920 will ever be memorable in Danish history. After the royal signature of the Treaty which restored North Schleswig to Denmark, Christian X could be seen riding over the old frontier on his white horse and attending at Dybbøl with other members of the Royal Family, the members of the Rigsdag and the Government, the greatest national meeting that had ever been seen in Denmark. To it flocked 100,000 persons from all parts of the land.

The leading characteristic of the Neergaard Government was their pronounced aversion to the administrative methods of the Social Democrats and Radicals. Neergaard proceeded to demolish, one after the other, all the war measures of the late Government. By widespread economies and increased taxes the Government succeeded within two years in almost balancing the budget. The first of these measures to arouse the hostility of the Opposition was that which aimed at a considerable reduction in military and naval expenditure. The Social Democrats were content with nothing but total disarmament and the replacement of the army by a watch corps. Mindful of the obligations that bound Denmark to a policy of neutrality and to the League of Nations, the Radicals believed in the preservation of a small army and fleet without conscription. Armament versus disarmament was, however, a minor point of contention compared with the economic

CRASH OF LANDMANDSBANK

problems which was to enlist all the statesman-like resources of the Government in the years to come. Wholesale prices which at the end of the war were four times higher than in 1914 took a violent fall in 1921 and this was accompanied by a loss in trade, a fall in shares, an increase of unemployment and a lowering in the value of agricultural produce. Agriculture suffered less than industry. Both employers and employees in industry demanded protection against foreign competition. Even confirmed free-traders like Madsen-Mygdal thought it expeditious to move a "step away" from free trade principles. The first step was the introduction of import regulations for the benefit of tobacco and boot factories who were considered to be the most affected by the foreigners' "valuta dumping."

A gruesome reflection on the country's financial position was the crash of the Landmandsbank in 1922 as the result of wild speculations and abnormal investments in unprofitable undertakings. To relieve public anxiety, the Government announced that the National Bank would come to the rescue and go guarantee for 30 million Kroner. When it was subsequently proved that the loss ran into 232 million Kroner, a law was passed by the Rigsdag giving a State guarantee for all legal claims on the bank. At the moment that legal action was to be taken against Emil Glückstadt, its managing director, he died in prison.

The Government might have survived this blow had it not been for other influences that were weakening the alliance between the Left and the Conservatives. Any hope, on the part of the Conservatives, of converting the Government to a policy of protective tariffs was shattered by the attitude of the Left. It was only as a singular privilege that the Government had condescended to introduce the system of export credit. A definite split between the two parties seemed in sight when the Government introduced a bill for levying taxes on fixed properties and ignored the Conservatives in concluding a commercial treaty with Russia in 1923. A sudden improvement in industries, employment and shipping and a good harvest might have served to allay discontent if these advantages had not been offset by a sudden depreciation in

FIRST SOCIAL DEMOCRAT GOVERNMENT

the Danish exchange. The establishment of an equalisation fund could not check the fall and a currency crisis further weakened the Government's position. They signed their death sentence when they made no demur at the holding of a Folketing election in April 1924. As the result, the Left and the Conservatives lost their majority in the two Houses and the Social Democrats took over power.

The first Social Democrat Government was not pre-eminently a Labour Cabinet. Many of the members, C. N. Hauge, F. Borgbjerg, L. Rasmussen, Nina Bang, were experienced journalists. Stauning was the only member who properly belonged to the labour classes. With the exception of Count Karl Moltke, who had been recalled from his post as Danish Minister in Berlin to be made Minister of Foreign Affairs in the new Government, all were members either of the Landsting or Folketing.

Of the administration of the new Government it may be generally said that they laid the greatest stress on economies except when they related to social reforms. As a condition for forming a government, Stauning had obtained the promised support of the Radicals. He had good reason to anticipate greater difficulties in administration than had ever been encountered by his predecessors in office. First of all, he could not expect that the Radicals would help in any measures which savoured of extreme Socialism. The greatest achievement of the Government was the restoration of the Krone exchange to par in 1926, but this success coincided with a rapid fall in prices. The resulting crisis hit agriculture most of all. Then, as before, the Government were divided in their opinions as to the means of facing it. In August 1926 the workmen's joint organisation asked the Government to introduce public works and import regulations, and from the agriculturalists came the demand for a reduction of wages and taxes. As the Radicals were unwilling to give way on the question of income tax, the Government could not proceed with their far-reaching plans for alleviating the crisis. In this impasse, the Folketing was dissolved and new elections to it were ordered. They resulted in a majority of 5 votes for the Left and Conservatives together over all other parties. Without

GOVERNMENT OF MADSEN-MYGDAL

an absolute majority, Stauning was unable to continue. He was succeeded, in 1926, by Thomas Madsen-Mygdal as the head of the second Left Cabinet formed since the Great War. As much a Liberal as he was the leading representative of Agriculture, he adhered in his Government to the principles of free trade and free competition.

TABLE I
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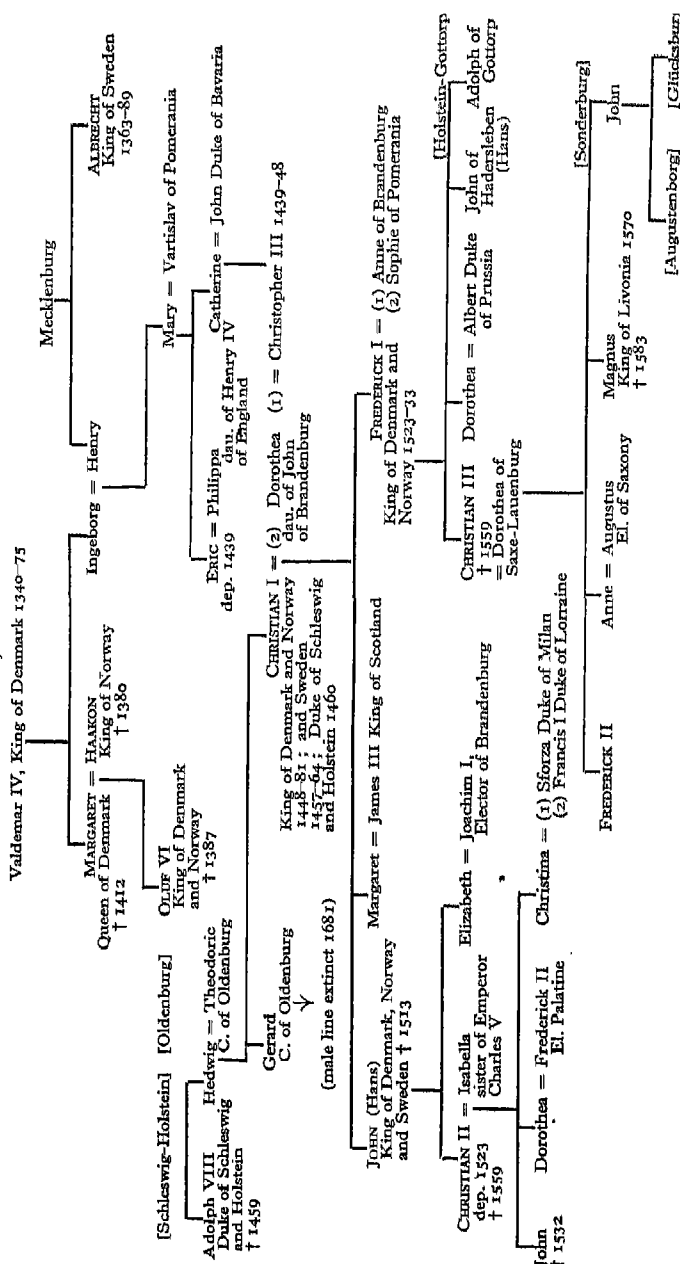
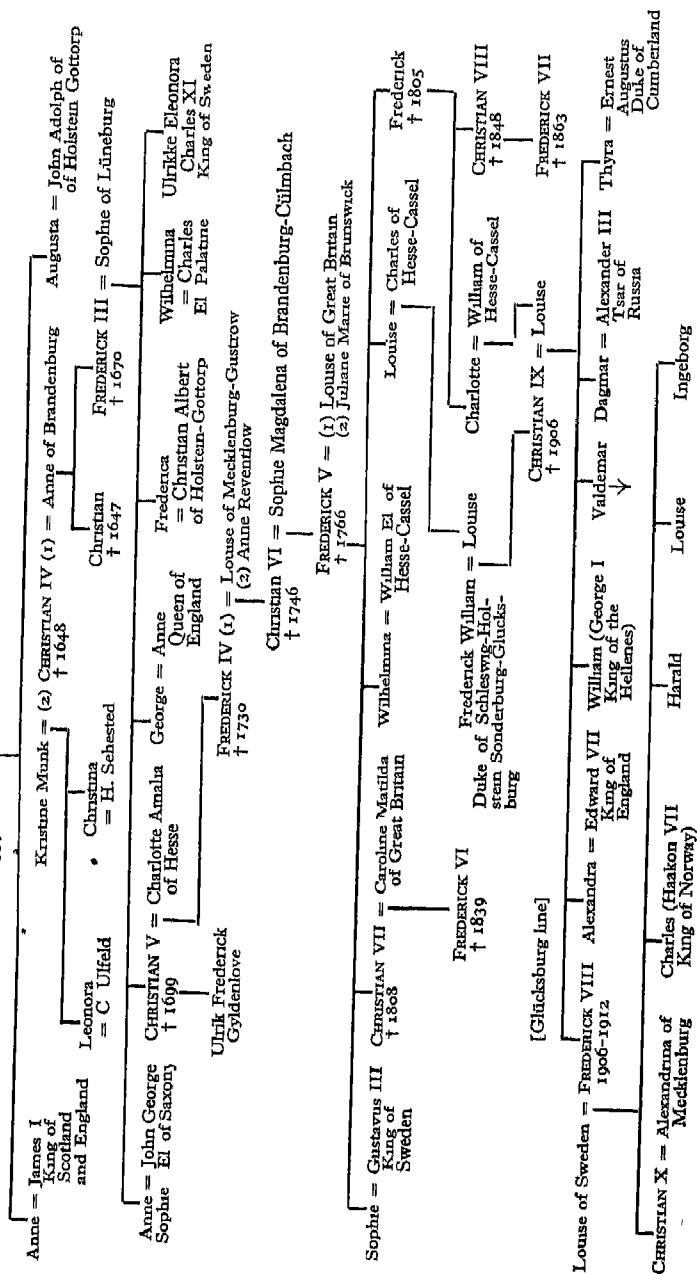
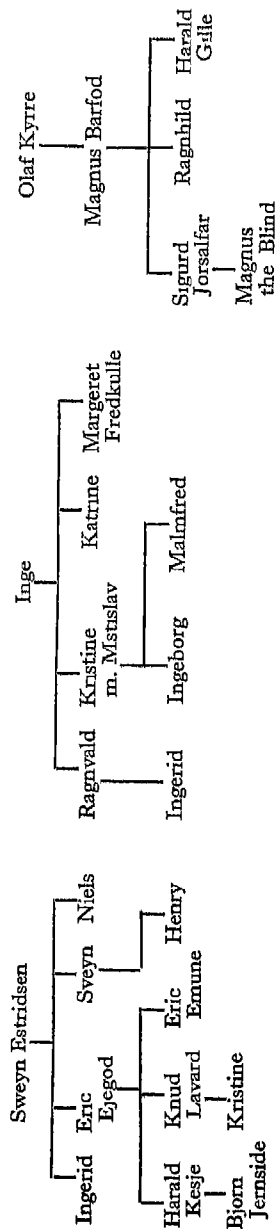


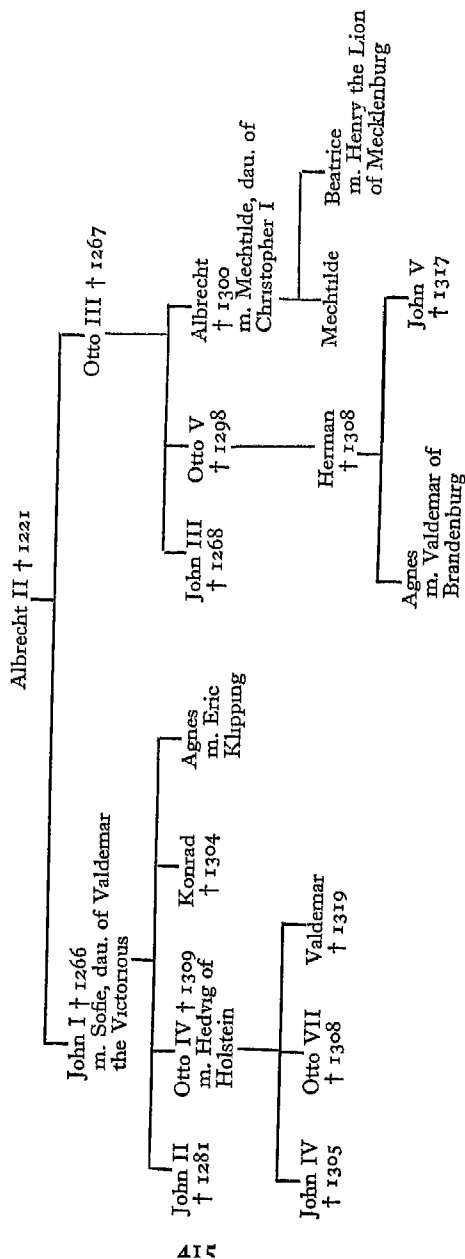
TABLE II

FREDERICK II = Sophie of Mecklenburg
1559-88

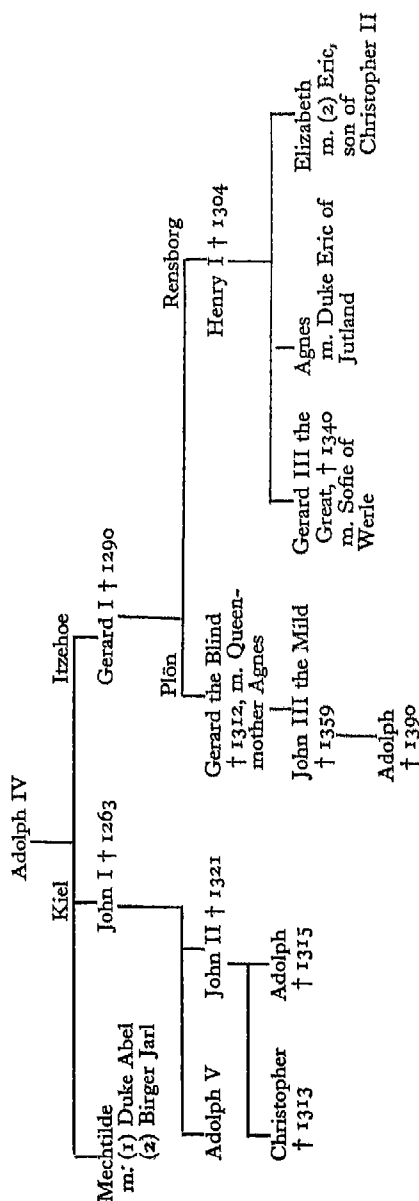
LINE OF SWEYN ESTRIDSEN AND OTHER NORTHERN ROYAL LINES



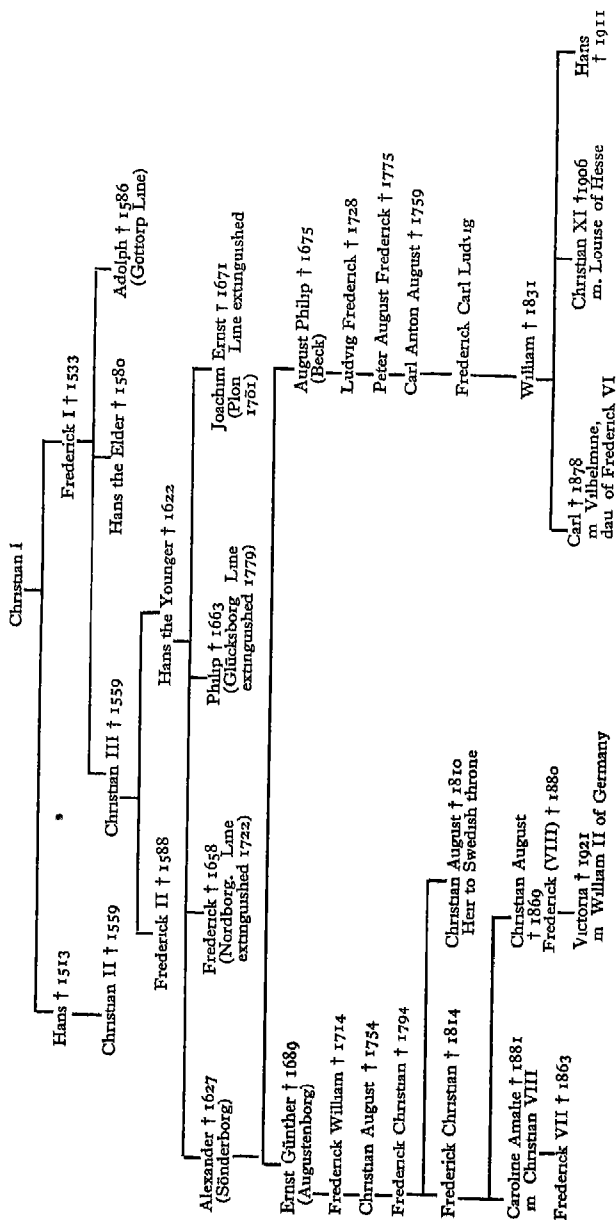
BRANDENBURG LINE



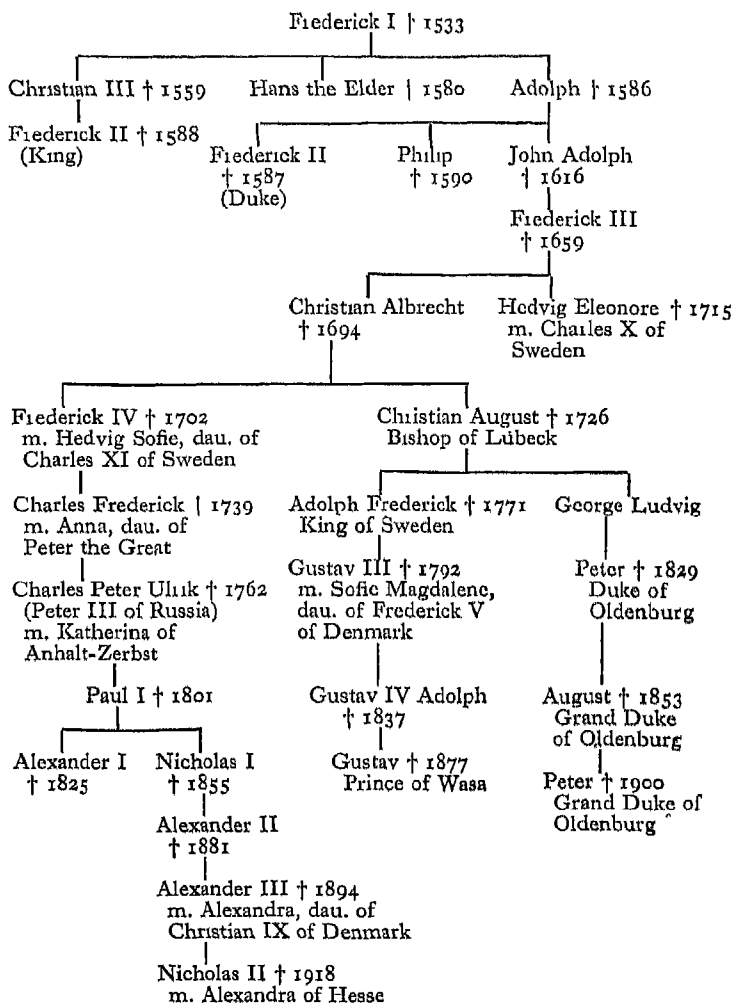
LINE OF SCHAUBENBURG COUNTS



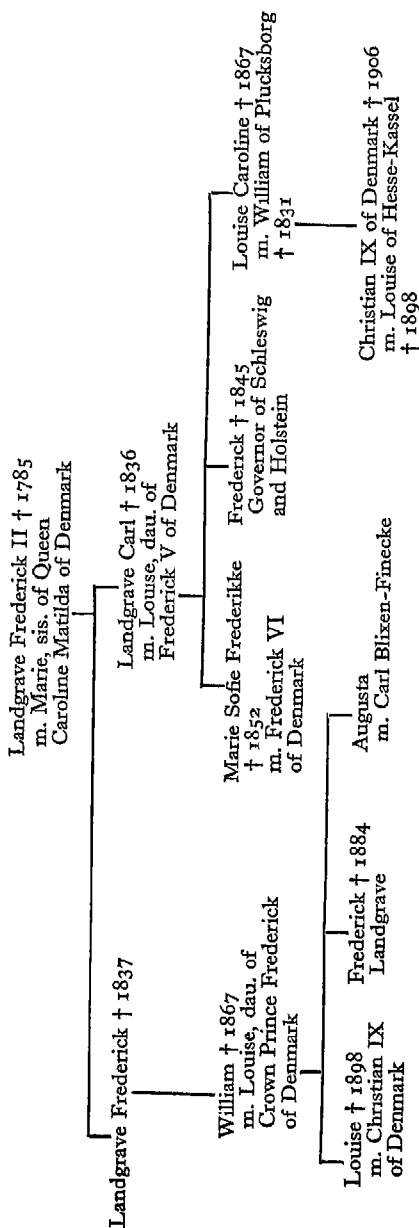
THE SÖNDERBORG LINES



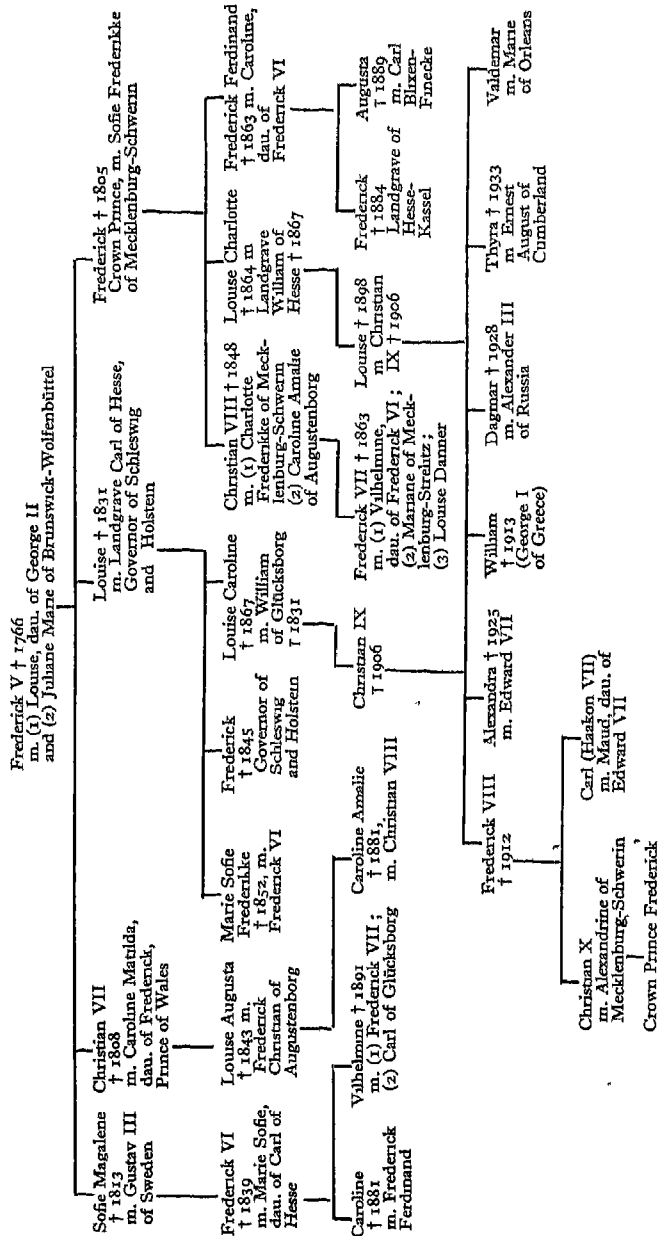
THE GOTTORP LINE



HESE-KASSEL LINE



LINEAGE OF FREDERICK V



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